Claustrum Animæ:

THE

Reformed Monastery;

OR,

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

A sure and short, pleasant and easie way to HEAVEN.

IN

Meditations, Directions, and Resolutions to Love and Obey JESUS unto Death.

In two Parts.

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Antonius Saunders,
Reverendissimo in Christo
Patri ac Domino Domino
GILBERTO Archiepiscopo
Cant. à Sacris Domesticis.

Ex Æd. Lambeth.
Febr. 16. 167$\frac{5}{6}$.

TO THE
Right Reverend Father in God

JOHN,

Lord Biſhop of *Oxford.*

My LORD,

'Tis not in regard of my Obligations to you, though I own them with grateful acknowledgements; 'tis not in regard of your late moſt deſerved advancement, though I heartily rejoyce at it: 'Tis in regard of your intrinſick goodneſs, that this Dedication begs your acceptance, and humbly offers it ſelf to you. Before Lordſhip *and* Paternity *were added to your Ho-*

nourable Titles, you was intitled to this book: your dignities being dignified by you, I considered not their eminency, but the eminency of your Vertue and Piety. I know, My Lord, that you aim at a better reward than this world can give; but that a great light set on a high place cannot be hid from the eyes of Men, Angels alone should rejoyce in the brightness of yours: you shun praise as much as you deserve it: you neither desire nor want any thing of Fame. But, My Lord, I wanted a living example of a sincere and devout lover of JESUS *to exemplifie my Discourse: and though (God be prai-*

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ſed) many more might be found in this Church, yet you are one of the faireſt and moſt attractive: in ſo much that though it be eaſier to write than to do well, yet a better Pattern of a Religious Life might be drawn from your actions than from my directions.

My Lord, I have juſt cauſe to fear that I have indulg'd my genius too far, and perhaps ſome will think that I would have Godlineſs to be Shorn *and devotion a* Recluſe *from the world, which is far from my thoughts or deſires: though I muſt confeſs that at firſt I intended a much different and leſs defective Treatiſe on this ſo*

good a ſubject, had not other neceſſary helps as well as abilities been wanting. However at the beſt I could have added nothing to ſuch perſons as your Lordſhip; the Holy flames of Divine Love that burn in your heart have too much light and fervency to have receiv'd any increaſe from me: and therefore I have not aim'd at any thing higher than only to aſſiſt the weak and fix the inconſiderate. But, My Lord; though I can not in the leaſt profit you by this my poor labour, yet its being own'd by you may be very advantageous to me: Your Reverend and much Honoured name will not only credit me, but which

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is more, will recommend my Book, and alſo promote its deſign of winning affectionate Servants and lovers to JESUS. *This I know you will rejoyce to do: Wherefore in preſenting my Book to your Lordſhip, I humbly beg your bleſſing on it and its Author. Who is with due reſpect and affection,*

Your Lordſhips

moſt dutiful Son

and moſt humble

Servant

L. B.

THE PREFACE.

'Tis probable that they, who theſe many years, have cry'd out Popery *(till they made way for it to come) upon every thing they lik'd or underſtood not, will ſtart and think that their fears are come upon them, at the ſight of the firſt Title-page: and poſſibly our Lay-Abbots will alſo be frighted at it, as though the diſpoſſeſt* Cœnobites *were coming again to lay claim to their old Manſions and fat indowments. For my part I wiſh that theirs may be but pannick terrors: yet*

withal, I wiſh they might ſo far affect them, as to make the firſt have a greater value for that Reform'd Religion, *and purer worſhip which then they would certainly loſe; and the laſt pay Tithes* Conſcienciouſly *out of thoſe eſtates, which then they would be forc'd to reſign. And yet I may, and do aſſure them, that if they will Read not only the Title, but the book alſo, it will certainly cure them of their fears, if it works no better change upon them: for its deſign is not to alter the eſtabliſh'd Religion, but to make us more devout and ſincere in the profeſſion thereof; nor yet to inrich any perſons with temporal eſtates, but to make us* gather treaſures in heaven, *and* ſet our affections on things above.

That the age we live in, is greatly deprav'd, is no obſervation of mine,

mine, there are almoſt as many that complain of it, as there are that contribute to the increaſing of its wickedneſs: 'tis in every mans mouth that vertue being diſgrac'd, vice is countenanc'd, and that the numerouſneſs of its votaries, makes it now impudent, as well as faſhionable. Therefore it ſhould be no difficult matter, to perſwade thoſe that have any ſenſe of Religion, or longing after its rewards, that they ought not to conform themſelves to this preſent evil world, *but chuſe a better pattern to live by. And the truth is, it matters not much, whether theſe be worſe than the former times; for the way to life hath all along been* ſtreight and narrow, *and found and follow'd but by* few: *as that to deſtruction* wide *and ſpacious, and yet crouded by the* many. *Good men have always liv'd in a*

perverſe and crooked generation: *So that if it be now, as it hath ever been, thoſe that will enter into life, muſt follow the* narrow *path, though they have but few fellow travellers: and if it be worſe, they muſt walk with the greater care and warineſs. However it be, the difference muſt needs be very great, betwixt the lives and works of thoſe, whoſe reward and condition will be ſo vaſtly different at laſt. And therefore whoever will go to heaven, had need keep at a great diſtance from that* world which lieth in wickedneſs, *and take a much contrary courſe, to thoſe* many *who go to deſtruction.*

But how then? Muſt we retire into Thebais, *with the Fathers of the deſert? Muſt we confine our ſelves to the ſoli-*

ſolitude of a Monaſtick Cell? *Or ſhall we become Quakers, and profeſs the ſullenneſs of Melancholy Fanaticks? Why, truly in Popiſh Countreys, the Cloiſter hath ingroſs'd the name of Religion, and they that would be, or be thought to be, devout beyond others, do uſually put on a Fryers hood, and imbrace the Rule of ſome* Religious Order: *and amongſt us Puritaniſm hath uſurp'd the Name of* Godlineſs; *and ſome who, in truth or in pretence, abhor looſeneſs, or are reclaim'd from a vicious life, will too often forſake not the world, but the Church; as it were to preſerve the ſtrictneſs of a ſeverer vertue, in the Society of a Separated Brother-hood. 'Tis poſſible that the irreligion and immorality of Chriſti-*

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It may be matter of inquiry whether that demure pretence of holineſs, the adverſaries had put on, did not more avert ſome of our libertines from them, than all their real crimes; they perhaps ſo far miſtook them, as to ſuſpect they might be in carneſt, when they profeſt to advance the power of Godlineſs. *Decay of Chriſtian Piety.* Pag. 198.

ans abroad, in the general, hath occaſion'd the diſtinction of Regular *and* Secular *perſons; and perhaps the prophaneneſs and debauchery of too too many amongſt us, who are in the Church, as the* tares *in the* field, *among the* wheat, *hath partly caus'd the unjuſt diſtribution, our late* Phariſees *had made of our people, into two parties, the* Godly *and the* Wicked: *though many are of opinion, that diſcontent or melancholy makes men, for the moſt part, both Monks and Schiſmaticks, or elſe ſpiritual pride or wordly intereſt. However it be, I will not make exprobrations againſt either of them, with diſobliging truths,*

truths, but rather commend what is praiſe-worthy in them: becauſe I would have every Chriſtian, to be really devout and preciſe, without entring the Cloiſter or the Conventicle.

*I am indeed ſomewhat jealous, that the ingaging men to be Religious and Vertuous, by other conſiderations beſides their Chriſtian duty hath done ſome prejudice to Religion; for now there be ſome that fanſie, ſelf-denial and contempt of the world to belong only to Friers, and others, that to abſtein from ſwearing and drunkenneſs, is only the part of a Puritan: Whereas Chriſtianity binds thoſe duties upon all its profeſſors, and every one, by his Baptiſmal vow is bound to perform them; though he doth not ſubmit himſelf to the Rule of S.*Francis, *or the dictates of the* Aſſembly. *The*

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heavenly mindedneſs of Carthuſians, *the zeal and laborious preaching of* Carmelites *and* Dominicans, *the penitent mortifications of* Franciſcans, *and the ſobriety of* Non-Conformiſts *are all contain'd in the Chriſtian Rule: and whoſoever owns it, needs not make new vows, wear diſtinct habits, or ſeparate from the Church, the better to diſcharge them: but only, ſeriouſly mind and ſtudy the obligations of his Religion, and, with diligence and ſincerity, live according to them. My deſign therefore is not to Incloiſter particular perſons, but to make a large Monaſtery of the whole Commonwealth, at leaſt to make every family a School*

Non deſiderabit tria illa vota ab hominibus reperta, qui primum, illud & unicum votum, quod in Baptiſmo, non homini ſed Chriſto nuncupavimus ſinceriter pureque ſervaverit. *Eraſ. Ench.*

Vellem univerſos Chriſtianos ita vivere, ut qui nunc ſoli Religioſi vocantur parum Religioſi viderentur.

School of Vertue and Piety, and every man an Aſcetick *and ſtrict liver: wiſhing heartily with* Eraſmus *that they, who hitherto, have been call'd* Preciſe *and* Religious, *by way of appropriation, might juſtly loſe that name, by the more exemplary lives of all other Chriſtians.*

But though it be my wiſh, it is not my hope in the leaſt, to ſee any ſuch thing come to paſs, by means of this little volume. Many much bigger and better have not been able to effect it; they that will not hear Moſes *and the Prophets, nay, Chriſt the Lord himſelf, will be far enough from being perſwaded by the meaneſt of his ſervants: and the truth is, it may be the matter of our deſires, but muſt never be expected, that a general Reformation of manners ſhould follow that of Doctrine among us. Nevertheleſs our indeavours ought*

not to be wanting; though our ſanctification be never conſummated here below, yet we are com-
2 Cor. 7. 1. *manded, and ſhould ſtrive* to perfect holineſs in the fear of God: *and ſo, though we know that many will ſo live, as that the end of them ſhall be deſtruction; yet ought we like S.* Paul, *to try all means*, that by any means we may ſave ſome. *If we convert none of the impenitent, we may benefit ſome better Chriſtians: and if our inſtructing our brethren by word or writing, profits none of them, yet it may make us take the better heed,* that after we have preached to others, we our ſelves be not caſt-aways.

Now to this end, my chiefeſt indeavour, is to make a Chriſtian devout, to make him love God with a ſincere love, and then make it appear by a hearty obedience; a devout

devout love is not only the beſt part, but alſo the beſt inſtrument of Religion, as being an irreconcilable enemy to ſin, a friend, or rather a nurſe to all vertue: No inticement could have drawn penitent Magdalene *to her former impurities, whilſt ſhe waſhed her deareſt Saviours feet with her tears: and 'tis known by experience that when reading, meditation, the ſight of a dying friend, or any ſuch thing, hath ſoftned a mans heart into a Religious temper, temptations would be then ſo far from prevailing, that they durſt not ſo much as appear before him. But when he returns to mind earthly things, and hath his thoughts taken up with the concerns of this life, he finds that his ſpiritual ſtrength decays, by the ſame proportions that his love becomes cold, and he grows indevout again.*

Love

Love is the queen, if not the fountain of paſſions, the great mover and governor of actions and affections: could we keep the fire of Divine Love always burning in our breaſts, it would be the moſt powerful and beſt inſtrument of Holy-living; it would make ſelf-denial and the yoke of Chriſt eaſie, it would make acts of vertue and Religion pleaſant; and it would make us delight in pleaſing God, as much as we naturally do in pleaſing our ſelves. Therefore I have made it my aim and deſign in the following Pages, to ſeize upon the affections, to inkindle in the hearts of Chriſtians the heavenly flames of the love of God. To that end, I have repreſented the more general benefits of God to mankind, and eſpecially that of Redemption, by the greateſt demonſtration of love that ever was given, the death of Jeſus: which

which if duly consider'd would be an irresistible motive to love him; I have shewed the power, the pleasure, and the great advantages of love; and I have us'd devout meditations and ejaculations, as it were to transport our souls to heaven by love, for to adore that God, whom love brought down from thence to save us. 'Tis certain that most of them that perish, perish for want of consideration; and I have heard dying men wonder at themselves, how they could be so stupid, as not to mind those things which are of an infinite concern, and should rather take up all our thoughts and our cares, than be neglected or forgot one only moment. Israel doth not understand, my people doth not consider. Isa. 1.3.

Love may be said to be that fire which God would have always to burn upon his altar, that is, in Lev.6.12.

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our hearts, which are his temple, where the ſacrifices of good works and the incenſe of devotion ſhould always be offer'd to him: now that ſacred fire muſt have fewel to entertain it; it muſt be nouriſh'd by reading good books, and eſpecially by frequent and pious meditations. Wherefore I have indeavour'd as much as I could to feed thoſe holy flames, by repreſenting things as they are; and I would have every Chriſtian, ſeriouſly and often to conſider, what God is, what he hath done, what he doth, and what he will do for us, if we love him ſincerely: as alſo, what we are, whence we come, whither we go, and how eaſie it is for us to be eternally happy, if we will ſet our affections upon God, who deſerves them ſo infinitely. Doubtleſs inconſideration is the cauſe why God is not loved! It is not poſſible men could re-

reſiſt the charms of his love, if they would open the eyes of their mind and of their faith to view them!

But how few are there that do it? How fully is the propheſie fulfill'd, Iniquity ſhall abound and the love of many ſhall wax cold? Mat. 24. 12

To how many Chriſtians might our Bleſſed Saviour ſay, as once to the Jews, I know you, that you have not the love of God in you? Joh. 5. 42.

How juſtly might now S. Paul *complain*, all men ſeek their own, not the things which are Jeſus Chriſts? Phil. 2. 21.

And how juſtly might our Bleſſed Lord, the great lover of men, complain in the words of his Apoſtle, I will gladly ſpend and be ſpent for you; *(or rather, I have gladly ſpent, and been ſpent for you)* though the more abundantly I love you, the leſs I be loved? 2 Cor. 12. 15.

Want of love is a very ſad & general evil among Chriſtians,

ſtians, in theſe worſt of times! and I hope ſome will be by me perſwaded, not careleſly to ſay, that they ſhall do as well as others: but, as wiſe men would in peſtilent times, carefully to provide Antidotes, to prevent or cure the infection. But alaſs, how ſhould I perſwade others? de ingratis etiam ingrati queruntur: Phyſician cure thy ſelf; *I help to propagate the diſtemper, and therefore am very unfit to preſcribe againſt it. Shall the unthankful teach gratitude? Shall the* Phariſee *perſwade others, when he ſaith and doth not? If it be as one ſaith,* qui non ardet non accendit, *that he that burns not with the Divine Fire of love, cannot inflame others with it; then I may well cry out with him,* væ mihi frigenti; *wo is me unhappy creature, who am ſo far from burning, that I am almoſt quite cold! and in-*

indeed, I know and grieve the defects and imperfections of my love, and have writ for my ſelf, more than for any others: and I heartily wiſh, better hearts and pens would treat of this ſubject, and help, that way amongſt others, to reinkindle that almoſt extinct fire of charity and devotion in the hearts of men; and in mine own, who would thankfully uſe their aſſiſtance, and heartily pray for a reward to them.

I have no more to ſay by way of Preface, but that if I have been ſo unhappy as to write any thing contrary to the Doctrine of the Church; I diſown and retract it before hand, and would blot it out with my blood: as for particular perſons, who may find fault with any thing herein, I deſire them to paſs it by. It matters not much, if they like not every paſſage and expreſſion; if they do but follow what

what they judge to be good, and approve my design, and love Jesus with all their hearts; it will be enough for their profit and my satisfaction.

1 John 4. 9. He that loveth not, knows not God, for God is Love.

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IT were as easie to find out the bottomless depth of the inexhaustible fountain of the Divine Bounty, as to tell the Streams which run from it; Gods mercies are over all his works, and all things that are made, are a demonstration as much of his goodness as of his being. I will not therefore undertake to number what is innumerable, or to express what we cannot so much as comprehend: but only in-

§. 1. *Of the benefits of God to mankind.*

ſiſt briefly upon ſome of the moſt general benefits of God to mankind, and in the repreſenting of them, endeavour to make us read our duty, and to inflame our hearts with love.

§. 2. *Of Creation.*

Firſt, *It is God that hath made us and not we our ſelves*, we owe him our very being; *thine hands have made and faſhioned me:* (ſaith *David*) *thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance being yet imperfect, and in thy book were all my members written.* Let us ſay therefore with the ſame Prophet, *I will praiſe thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:* and let us with him, *fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker.* You know that by the Laws of God and of all Nations, there is an indiſpenſable obligation upon all children to love and honour their Parents, becauſe they brought them into the world: now certainly the obligation doubles upon every man, in reſpect to his *Father which is in heaven*; for our natural parents were but ſecond cauſes under him, his own power it was that form'd and created us: they ingendred our mortal bodies only, he is *the Father of Spirits*, he himſelf gave being to our im-

Pſal. 119. 73. 139. 16.

immortal ſouls. Therefore let every man pay to his Maker thoſe duties he would expect from his child: *if I am a Father* (ſaith God) *where is mine honour?* If from our heavenly Father we have receiv'd our life and being, let us pay that reſpect, and love and obedience to him, which thereby are become his due. *Mal.* 1.6.

But there is yet more in this; Creation is not a tranſient act; the ſame power that once gave us our being, doth ſtill exert it ſelf in the continuation thereof. When a child is born, he ſubſiſts by himſelf, his parents need not take any care, that he returns not to his priſtine condition: but we have the ſame dependance upon God in our preſervation as we had in our creation; ſhould he withdraw his Almighty hand, we ſhould return to our firſt nothing; *in him we live and move, and have our being*; Therefore we are the more bound to ſerve and love him, that he not only made us to be; but gives us, as it were, a new being every moment, by continuing our life and duration, by that Almighty will, whereby he effected our firſt production.

Now if we conſider further, not only that God made us, but what he made us, it will yet inforce thoſe bonds of duty, which Creation tied upon us. For it was in our Makers power, either to make us vile and abject as the vileſt of beaſts, or to deny us thoſe faculties and abilities, which are moſt honourable and moſt uſeful to our nature: but he made us Men, the moſt wonderful of his creatures; in us he joyn'd what heaven and earth had moſt excellent, an immortal Spirit, created after his image, with the moſt elaborated, the moſt perfect of material things: Take a view of the marvellous organs of thy ſenſes, of the curious contrivance of thoſe joints and ligaments which unite thy ſeveral members, of thoſe various and delicate channels which contain thy blood and ſpirits; in a word of all the parts and paſſions of thy body, which are all made for neceſſity and comelineſs; and then admire the great goodneſs, as well as wiſdom of thy creator; and ſay with the Pſalmiſt, that thou art *fearfully and wonderfully made*, and that Gods works *are very marvellous*.

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After this let thy thoughts dive deeper, and conſider thine interior ſenſes; the myſterious union of thy ſoul and body, with the beauty of that Divine Light which we call Reaſon; thy memory, thy will, thine underſtanding, which are the faculties of thy precious ſoul, which is not only created after Gods image; but is capable and deſirous to enjoy him: and then ſee how numerous, or rather innumerable are the benefits which God hath beſtowed upon us in our creation, and how juſt it is that we ſhould love him, that *we ſhould glorifie God, in our Body and in our Spirits, which are Gods.*

§. 3. *Of Preſervation.*

Preſervation comes next to be conſider'd; a benefit of very large extent, and well deſerving that rank, the Church hath plac'd it in, in making it the ſubject of our daily thankſgiving; for ever ſince man chang'd the impenetrable armour of Original Righteouſneſs, for a thin covering of fig-leaves, he became ſo defenſleſs, and yet expos'd to ſo many ſharp and wounding arrows, that ſhould not Divine Protection in-

terpoſe for to ſhelter and ſecure him, his temporal Life would be a true and a ſad emblem of Eternal Death. It appears by the hiſtory of Patient *Job*, that if we were not fenc'd about with the hedge of a gracious providence, we ſhould find that all creatures conſpire our vexation and ruine. God had no ſooner broke the incloſure; but afflictions crowded in ſo faſt upon that happy man, that in a ſhort time there remained nothing of his former proſperity, but a bare and bitter remembrance, to make the ſenſe of his preſent miſery more grievous. There is no man, but is expos'd to all the greateſt Calamities that ever befel any of the Sons of *Adam:* and there is none able by his own power, to defend himſelf againſt the leaſt of them. Fortune and accidents ſport themſelves (if I may ſo ſpeak) with our goods and eſtates; Moths fret our garments, ruſt cankers our metals, thieves break through and ſteal our riches, or elſe *they make to themſelves wings and fly away*; beſides their own corruptibility which of its ſelf would conſume them, they are expos'd to ſo many hazards, that it would

would be as impertinent, as 'tis impoſſible to number all the ways and means, whereby men are afflicted with loſſes, and brought to poverty: only from hence, we may juſtly infer, that the ſame God *who gives us all things richly to enjoy*, muſt alſo ſecure them in our poſſeſſion, or elſe we certainly loſe them.

If we look on our ſelves, we ſhall like the Prophets man in *Dothan*, ſee armed enemies on all ſides of us, our ſpiritual enemies are many, ſtrong, and full of rage and malice; and yet we have no defence againſt them: but that God makes his heavenly hoſt, to wait on our ſafety, incamps his Angels about us, to be an inviſible guard againſt our inviſible enemies, and not only ſo, but to ſecure us alſo from thouſands of ſudden and ſad accidents, which might, every moment befal us. All creatures are now furniſh'd with a ſting wherewith they may either vex or kill us. The elements and all compounded bodies, the air we breath, and the food that nouriſheth us, all things in nature, and all things in chance, may become our tormentors or murthers. Nay, we carry ſwords 2 *King.*6.

and daggers in our own boſoms; we have within our ſelves the matter of all ſorts of diſtempers; not one joynt in our bodies, but may be afflicted with the gout; Not one humour, but may overflow its banks, and quench the light of Reaſon, or the fire of Life; Not one pore or part within or without, but may unexpectedly, at all times, and in all places, become an entrance to death and ſorrow. In the midſt of ſo many and great dangers, it were impoſſible for us to ſtand one moment, but that *God defends us under his wings* and *keeps us ſafe under his feathers*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, and ſo the bleſſings of immunity, which moſt men ſlight, or over-look, are never enough to be acknowledg'd, but deſerve the thanks of a whole life. *We dwell under the defence of the moſt high, and abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty: therefore let us ſet our love upon him and glorifie him.*

Pſal. 90.

§. 4. *The Poſitive bleſſings of this life.*

The Poſitive bleſſings of this life, are now to be expoſed to view; but of them, I may uſe the words of the Pſalmiſt, *If I would reckon and ſpeak of them, they are more in number than can be numbred.*

Pſal. 40.

numbred. Health and ſtrength, and comlineſs, with induſtry and learning, are ſhar'd among the ſons of men in ſeveral proportions: and ſo are good friends, and a good name, peace, plenty, and pleaſures; any one of thoſe ſingle, might make a rich portion for one man, for each, within it ſelf contains many rich and precious bleſſings: yet oftentimes, God unites all, or moſt of theſe together, *to crown us with loving kindneſs and tender mercies.* The works of creation, and the works of providence are not more numerous, then the graces and gifts of God to mankind; any one that ſhould ſeriouſly meditate upon this ſubject, would find it multiply and increaſe almoſt to immenſity, and would be forc'd to break off with the exclamation of *David*; *Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the ſon of man, that thou ſo regardeſt him:* God renews his mercies to us every day together with our lives; every hour, *we eat of the fatneſs of his houſe, drink of the river of his pleaſure,* and receive the ſweet emanations that flow continually from *the fountain of life.* But of thoſe benefits which God pours open hands upon

Pſal. 103.

Pſal. 8. 4.

Pſal. 36.

on us, how many are there that paſs unregarded! we uſually mind, not what we receive, but what we deſire. Let heaven rain Manna never ſo thick upon us, if we wiſh for Quails, Angels food ſhall be unſavory, and perhaps diſtaſtful. They that long for great and well covered tables, find no reliſh in their daily bread; they that purſue after wealth, look not on the bleſſings of competency; they that aſpire to honour, receive health, food and raiments, rather with a diſdainful anger, than with thankfulneſs; all the favours we receive from God, are unobſerved or ſlighted as long as he doth not gratifie our humour with what we deſire, and even theſe gifts whereof we are moſt ſenſible, are ſoon laid in oblivion; an hours pain will cauſe many longer pleaſures to be forgotten; and if God ſends evil upon us only for one day, it makes us forget the many good things, which we for many years received from him. This I ſay, becauſe many mens unſatiableneſs and ingratitude makes them overlook moſt of Gods bleſſings; deſpiſe what they have, and value only what they have not; and ſo murmur and complain when they

they ſhould give thanks. But whoever ſhall diligently obſerve all the gracious diſtributions of that God, who always giveth to all men, being debtor to none, all the ſupplies and comforts we receive from him, will heartily ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *O love the Lord all ye his Saints*; and, *O that men would therefore praiſe the Lord, for his goodneſs, and declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men; that they would exalt him in the congregation of the people, and praiſe him in the ſeat of the elders.* *Pſal.* 31. 107.

Thoſe Benefits we have hitherto mention'd, we receive as we are men, and that, from the free goodneſs of our gracious God, *we are his people, and the ſheep of his paſture*; we are, and we have nothing that is good, but it comes from him; he made us, he preſerves us, and he provides for us: therefore, *O go your way into his gates with thankſgiving and into his courts with praiſe, be thankful unto him, and ſpeak good of his name.* It was *Jacob's* vow, that if God would keep him, and give him food and raiment, whilſt he ſojourn'd in *Haran*, *then the Lord ſhould be his God*: Now what

§. 5. *What returns we ſhould make for them.*

what was his vow ſhould be our reſolution and practice; God feeds, and clothes, and defends us, therefore ought he to be our God; That is, we ought to own him for ſuch by faithful ſervice and hearty obedience. Therefore, 1. Let us pay our bounteous Benefactor, the juſt and eaſie tribute of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, for our creation, preſervation, and all the bleſſings of this life. 2. Let us ſet apart daily, ſome of that time which he gives us, for acts of Worſhip and Religion. 3. *Let us honour the Lord with our ſubſtance*; either in ſecret charities or publick offerings, paying him an acknowledgement, that he is our land-lord; and laſtly, let us apply our ſelves to obſerve his Laws, to do what pleaſeth him; becauſe we are not our own, we owe our ſelves to him, we are his, he gave us our being. Theſe are acts of natural Religion, and them we owe to God, as he is our Creator and Benefactor.

§. 6. *Of Redemption and firſt of the infinite miſeries we are redeemed from.*

Now are to be conſidered the benefits we receive from God as we are ſinners; the mercies of our Redemption; how God our Creator is become *JESUS*, our Saviour; how after

after having given us many good things, he at laſt gave himſelf for us. And that we may the better underſtand the greatneſs of this unſpeakable and Divine Mercy, let our meditation deſcend a while into that bottomleſs gulf of perdition wherein we were plunged by nature, in this plain manner. Repreſent to thy ſelf a man in *Job's* condition, having added to his ulcers and poverty all the ſaddeſt calamities that ever afflicted any man upon earth, eſpecially the remorſes and horrors of a guilty and tormented conſcience, crying out of impatience and deſpair with *Cain, my pain is greater than I can bear.* This unhappy creature having for many years born the uneaſie weight of his miſeries, linger'd out a tedious and diſconſolate life, is at laſt ſtruck to the heart with a mortal wound and dies, and ſo paſſeth from temporal to eternal ſorrows; he falls into a lake of fire and brimſtone, a place where there is nothing but woe and darkneſs, weeping and gnaſhing of teeth; where there is no company but of tormented and tormentors; nothing to be ſeen, but what is frightful, no voices to be heard but curſes, ſhrieks

ſhrieks and lamentations, where there is the abſence of all good and the preſence of all evil; where *men deſire to die*, and *death flees away from them*. This is the fulneſs of his miſery, that it ſhall have no end, that he muſt dwell with everlaſting burnings; *their fire is not quenched, and their worm dies not*. If weeping but one tear every day, he might expect to be releaſt, after he had wept as much as would make an ocean, it would be ſome comfort! but at the end of ſo many millions of years as would ſuffice to weep a Sea, his torments will be as far from ending as the firſt day they began: and if after this manner in proceſs of time, he ſhould ſhed tears enough to make many more ſeas, yet ſtill it might be truly ſaid, *this is but the beginning of ſorrows*; ſtill there is an intolerable Eternity to come; for after as many thouſands of millions of years as tongue can expreſs or heart comprehend; Eternity is nothing leſſened; ſtill it is what it was before, an abyſs of duration that can have no end; this excludes all comfort, this fills his ſoul with a woful deſpair, this is another hell in the midſt of hell, which in-

rageth

rageth him, and perpetually tortures his mind, to think that there will be no end of his ſufferings, that he can conceive no hope of being deliver'd: but that he muſt bear to all Eternity, what every moment is intolerable! O dreadful Eternity, who can ſeriouſly think of thee and not tremble! Now if thou doſt ask for what reaſon this wretched creature is thus tormented, know that it is for ſin; becauſe his firſt parents broke the Law of their Creation, and he followed their footſteps; they involv'd him firſt in the guilt of a wicked rebellion againſt God, and afterwards by his own acts he made himſelf yet more criminal; by nature he was a *child of wrath*, and then he became ſo, yet more by his own tranſgreſſions; he was *ſold under ſin*, and then he became a willing ſlave to it; his own thoughts, words, and works being evil, and that continually, he forſook God, and diſhonor'd him, and profeſt enmity againſt him, and oppos'd his depraved will to Gods Holy Will, and ſo became obnoxious to the infinite juſtice of God, which therefore juſtly inflicts this deſerved puniſhment upon him.

And

And now, if knowing the reaſon, thou doſt inquire after the perſon, who by being ſo unholy, is become ſo extremely unhappy; I could ſay with the Prophet, *thou art the man*, this is thy patrimony, as thou art a child of *Adam*; this thou art by nature: but the Divine Mercy hath reſcu'd thee from this miſery, and therefore I muſt ſay, *thou wert the man*, this muſt have been thy caſe, had not the Holy *JESUS* work't thy Redemption by means as wonderful, as was his pity and charity.

But before I proceed I muſt alſo propound one queſtion. Two men are equally indebted, and equally unable to pay; the one is patiently forborn and at laſt freely acquitted, the other is caſt into the dungeon, and a while after compaſſionately releaſt and ſet at liberty; I demand, is not he that never entred the Priſon, as much bound to love his generous creditor, as he that was deliver'd out of it? yes doubtleſs, or rather more: becauſe his debt is alſo forgiven, and yet he is freed from that trouble and ſorrow, which his fellow debtor underwent. Why then, thy gracious Redeemer, by ſaving thee from the horrors and torments of Hell, hath laid

laid on thee, at leaſt as great obligations to love him, as if he had brought thee out of it, after thou hadſt been long detain'd therein. Therefore I deſire, thou wouldſt bring thy thoughts back again to that unpleaſant abode, and conſider thy ſelf as if thou wert ſhut up in that diſmal dungeon, and then expreſs what thou wouldſt give to be releaſt, what thou wouldſt do for him that ſhould bring thee out of that horrible and bottomleſs pit.

I know that they that are afflicted with ſharp pains and grievous ſickneſſes, would purchaſe health with all the wealth they have; and I believe no reward would hire a man, to hold his hand in the fire but for one hours time: therefore I doubt not but that, if it were in a mans power, he would give this, and a thouſand more worlds, to be brought out of an ever-burning furnace: and I am perſwaded, that if thou wilt ſuffer thy fanſy to be active in framing the black and dreadful ſcene of helliſh horrors about thee, thou wilt then heartily ſay, were I owner of the whole univerſe, I would joyfully give it, to come out of theſe ever-burning

ing flames which torment my body, and to be freed from this never dying worm, the remorses of my guilty conscience, which torture my soul: but because I have nothing, freely would I give my self to him, that should bring me out of this woful place. O I would follow him any where, do any thing that he should command me, imbrace his feet, kiss the ground they tread on, and give him all the demonstrations of a sincere and passionate Love! Well, thy petition is granted, before 'twas presented; the Love and Mercy of *JESUS* hath prevented thy request, and distress: Now make good thy vows and resolutions; Love and Serve *JESUS* thy Redeemer, and give thy self up wholly to him. I know that many may be good Christians, without *being snatch't out of the fire*, without these terrors and affrightments: but I am shewing what our condition had been without a Saviour, what is that gulf of perdition, whence *JESUS* hath sav'd us, if we will be saved by him: and I mention these *terrors of the Lord*, as S. *Paul* calls them, *to perswade men*; to be motives of an active and vehement Love.

Love. For 'tis too obſervable, that few men ſeriouſly conſider what *Redemption* means, what it was we were redeemed from, elſe they could not be ſo indevout, ſo diſobedient, ſo unthankful to their Saviour. S. *Paul* ſuppoſing, as I do here, that without Chriſt we were already dead and periſh't, makes it the reaſon of that *Conſtraining Love* which enabled him and other Primitive Chriſtians, to ſuffer ſo patiently, and act ſo zealouſly for JESUS; *the love of Chriſt* (ſaith he) *conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead*; as if he ſhould ſay, we were certainly dead, irrecoverably loſt, had not Chriſt died, to purchaſe life and ſalvation for us: therefore we cannot chuſe but love him, and it is no wonder if that love be ſtrong, and if we are govern'd and acted by it. That thou maiſt therefore love affectionately and live devoutly, conſider ſeriouſly that death, the miſery of that condition wherein thou wert, and ever muſt have been, hadſt thou not a JESUS. I might add, that we were delivered from the power and ſlavery, as well as from the condemnation

nation of sin: but this is included in the other, it being impossible *to be saved from the wrath to come*, without *bringing forth fruits meet for repentance*: and as it is mercy and grace on God's part, so on ours, it is matter of duty and earnest indeavour, and must be the result and effect of our love, first that we offend not, and then that we serve diligently, and faithfully him that *redeemed us from our vain conversation, and gave himself for us, that we being dead unto sin, might live unto righteousness.*

§. 7. *How we were Redeemed.*

A further ingagement to love and obey, will be to consider the manner how our redemption was effected, and the price that was paid for it, thus, The Blessed Son of God, the Second Person of the Ever-glorious Trinity undertook that work himself which none else could perform: *for us men, and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.* In this act of his, miracles and mercies seem to vie one with another; that the God of Eternity should be born in time, that the Creator of all things should be the Son

In præsepe jacet, sed mundum continet ubera fugit, sed angelos pascit. Aug. Ser. de purific. 2.

Son of a Creature; that the moſt higheſt ſhould abaſe himſelf to the low condition of a ſervant; that God ſhould become an infant, is a miracle of Love, which we can admire and adore, but never fully comprehend. The greatneſs of God is unſearchable, his excellencies and perfections are incomprehenſible, he is infinitely good, powerful, wiſe, and holy: Man contrariwiſe, is in himſelf wicked and weak, ignorant, impure and miſerable, there is ſo great a diſproportion betwixt God and man, ſo wide, ſo immenſe a diſtance, that nothing leſs than an infinite love could have fill'd up the gulf betwixt thoſe two ſo different natures, and united them into one perſon. 'Twas never ſeen that a ſhepherd would creep upon all four, and cover himſelf with a ſheep-skin, to call his flock out of danger, and to expoſe himſelf for it: but *the good ſhepherd* did much more! When he came *to lay down his life for his* loſt and wandering *ſheep*, and gather them into his fold; he took on him, not only the likeneſs, but the very nature of them: he became *the lamb of God*, that he might be the ſhepherd of mankind. Though he was

Hæc eſt menſura amoris, non ſolum quantum fecit nos, quanta fecit pro nobis, ſed & quantillus tatius eſt pro nobis.

was infinitely more above man, then men are above beaſts, yet he became *the ſon of man*, that he might become the Saviour of men: 'Twas never ſeen that a Sovereign Prince would ſeek to reduce to loyalty the moſt abject of his rebellious ſubjects, by mixing blood with them, uniting their families together: but behold the Supreme Monarch of heaven and earth contracts a near affinity with his ungrateful rebels, who are as vile and miſerable, as they are criminal, that he may free them from their guilt, and win them to their duty and their happineſs. Proud and wretched ſinner! thou wouldſt be ſo far from entring into the kindred of meaner perſons, thoſe that are much thine inferiors, that thou canſt hardly indure to be in their company: and behold, the moſt Glorious and Holy God, thine offended Sovereign, is become thy near relation, is become thy Brother, that he may win thine affections and become thy Saviour!

His life, all along, was a continuation of his great mercy and humility, *he went about doing good*, healing all manner of diſeaſes Corporal and Spiritual,

ritual, giving excellent inſtructions and great examples of vertue. But what we now conſider, and what ſhould moſt affect us, is, that for our ſakes *he was a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*, all the time of his abode here below. At his firſt entrance into the world, he was degraded, even below the condition of the meaneſt infants, being born in a Stable and laid in a Manger; eight days after he began *to be numbred among the tranſgreſſors*, receiving the bloody and painful Sacrament of Circumciſion, which belong'd only to ſinners; in his youth he lived in poverty and obſcurity, and was ſubject to his Parents; when he manifeſted himſelf to the world, then he perpetually *indur'd the contradiction of ſinners*; beſides that he liv'd upon alms, *becoming poor for us, who was Lord of all*: he wanted even time to eat what the charity of pious perſons afforded him, and had not ſo much as *a place where he might reſt his head*. He was tempted of Satan, *that he might ſuccour thoſe that are tempted*, he often watcht whole nights to Prayer, and was often faint with tireſome journeys, and hunger, and thirſt: and what

what is yet worſe, he was daily perſecuted by ingrateful men, for whom he indur'd all this. They ſlander'd him with falſe imputations of being a glutton and a wine-bibber; his kind and charitable affability in converſing with noted ſinners, was made matter of accuſation, as if he had conſented to their evil deeds; his Divine Doctrine was derided, as if proceeding from madneſs; the miracles which he wrought in their behalf, were ſaid to be done by ſorcery, and pact with *Beelzebub:* and to all theſe diſgraces and contumelies, they would often have added violence, and ſton'd him to death, had he not eſcap'd out of their hands by a haſty flight.

Mat. 15. 32. Lord, thou hadſt compaſſion on the multitudes, becauſe they had follow'd *thee three days, and had nothing to eat*, and thou livedſt above three and thirty years, waiting upon thy baſe and fugitive ſervants, who were become thine enemies, ſeeking to prevent their ruine, by the aſſiduity of thy care and kindneſs! O ſad ingratitude, that we ſhould be ſo ſoon weary in ſerving thee, when thou wert ſo patient and indefatigable in acting and ſuffering for us, for our happineſs and ſalvation.

But

But if we desire *to be rooted and grounded in love*, and to comprehend with all Saints the immense charity of the Son of God, *which passeth knowledge*, which infinitely exceedeth all Learning in profitableness and excellency, then measure the love of Christ, by the dimensions of his Cross, the breadth and the length, the depth and the height thereof, for therein love appears in its full extent, so that nothing can be added to it. That the eternal Son of God would become our Brother, by becoming Man, and would live in Poverty and Contempt, was very much: but that afterwards he would die for us, in that manner as he did, is the greatest wonder that ever the world saw. And indeed, there hapned more prodigies when he died, than at all other times of his humiliation; the sun hid himself, darkness overspread the whole world; the earth shook, the stones and rocks were rent, the graves were opened, and the vail of the Temple was divided in twain; Nature seem'd to be amaz'd to see her God suffer, and die upon a cross, *greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life*

§. 8. *A consideration of the Cross in its four dimensions.* *Eph.*3.17.

for his friend, 'tis true man cannot poſſibly do more, but *JESUS* did much more: he was God, then he became man that he might die for his enemies. This is it, whereof S. *Paul* ſpeaks, when he ſaith that it was never conceived or ſeen, how great are the things which God hath prepar'd for them that love him; *we ſpeak* (ſaith he) *the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom which none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory: but as it is written, eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither is it entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.* It appears that he ſpeaks (not of the bliſs of heaven but) of the crucifixion of our Bleſſed Saviour, which to the Jews was a ſtumbling block, and to the Gentiles fooliſhneſs, and which neither the ſenſes nor the reaſon of man could ever comprehend; but, as a hidden myſtery was made known to Chriſtians, by the revelations of the all-knowing Spirit of God. To underſtand therefore as much as may be, this

this never fully underſtood and never enough admir'd love of our Redeemer, in dying for us, let us in the firſt place view the Breadth of his Croſs; that is, the variety of the torments he indur'd for us, in the laſt ſtage of his uneaſie pilgrimage.

§. 9. *The Breadth.*

We may begin with the manner of his apprehenſion; he was taken as if he had been a publick enemy to mankind, a thief or a murtherer, with ſwords and ſtaves, with rudeneſs and violence; he was betray'd by one of his Diſciples, forſaken by the reſt, and then bound and drag'd from place to place by thoſe he had inſtructed and fed, and in whoſe behalf he had workt miracles. He was call'd an impious blaſphemer and voted guilty of death, for confeſſing a great and neceſſary truth, that he was the only Son of God. Afterwards he was expos'd a whole night to the indignities and mockeries of his inſulting enemies; they ſpet upon his ſweet and glorious face; they vail'd him, and ſmote his head and buffetted him; and as if he had been a contemptible ideot, to be made

ſport withal, they bad him propheſie, gueſs who gave him the blows, he was accus'd before the *Roman Pretor*, as being a lew'd malefactor, a rebellious traitor who *ſubverted the people and forbade to pay tribute to Cæſar*. From thence he was ſent to King *Herod*, where he was ſet at nought, and abus'd by him and his Souldiers, and then ſent back with ſcorn and contempt to *Pilate*. Afterwards *Barrabas* a ſeditious murtherer was prefer'd to him, and a loud clamor rais'd by the people, that he might be crucified and put to death. Then was he whipt before their eyes, tied to a poſt like a vile ſlave, and expos'd to the ſervile rods, whiles they *plough'd furrows upon his back*, as the Prophet ſpake; the Souldiers took him, platted a Crown of thorns and preſt it on his head, till the blood run of all ſides of him; they beat him with canes and clubs, and put a reed inſtead of a ſcepter in his hand, and when he was all over ſpittle and blood they brought out their mock-King, and *Pilate* preſented him to the people, and ſaid *behold the Man*, thinking to move them to pity, by ſo ſad a ſpectacle; but nothing

thing leſs than his death would ſatisfie their inrag'd cruelty: therefore he was condemn'd, and then abus'd afreſh by the Souldiers, and loaded with his Croſs and driven out of the City to Mount *Golgotha*. Now here begins a new ſcene of ſorrows; the afflicted *Son of Man*, having loſt much blood, and ſuffer'd ſo much; having been rudely hal'd from the garden to *Annas*, from *Annas* to *Caiphas*, from *Caiphas* to *Pilate*, from *Pilate* to *Herod*, from *Herod* to *Pilate* again, and from thence to the place of his Execution, arives at laſt, faint, and weary, and ſorrowful upon Mount *Calvary*, where he was to die; here his hands and feet (which are moſt ſenſible parts of our bodies, by being moſt full of nerves) were pierc't through and nail'd to the Croſs; and though there was a ſeat where to reſt his body, as the Ancients ſay, yet the Croſs being lift up, and put into the hollowneſs of the ground to make it ſtand upright, his wounded body was ſhaken and affected, doubtleſs with a moſt acute pain, he was expos'd naked, not only to the view of the multitudes, but alſo to the open air, which was extreamly cold,

in that the Sun was hid, he was burnt inwardly with an exceſſive heat and drineſs, being tir'd with ſo many journies, and being exhauſted of ſpirits and moiſture, by his ſorrows and bleeding, inſomuch that he complain'd of this above all his other ſufferings, crying out, *I thirſt*, (though we may ſay, that he thirſted moſt our happineſs, that he thirſted to drink out the dregs of his bitter cup, that we might drink *the cup of Salvation*) he wanted the uſe of his hands and feet, being tied to ſuffer, ſo that he could not ſo much as ſtir, nor wipe the blood off of his face, he was affliſted with the ſight of his afflicted Mother, who from her wounded ſoul reflected ſorrow upon her dying Son and Saviour. His ſoul was alſo, as it were crucified, by the ſenſe of the Divine Anger againſt the ſins of men, for the which he was making expiation, inſomuch that he complain'd, that God had forſaken him. And laſtly, his heart ſtrings were broke, and his body depriv'd of life, by a moſt violent and bitter death. And now, who ſhall not love *JESUS?* and who ſhall not admire that love which is expreſt in the breadth

breath of the Croſs? Lord how exceeding broad was thy Croſs, which contain'd ſo many ſorts of torments! Nothing can be compar'd to it, but thy charity, which made thee take it up, that we might be charg'd with nothing, but a pleaſant and *eaſie yoke*! But Lord, why do we, moſt vile and ſinful creatures refuſe to bear thy *light burthen*, when thou the Moſt Holy and Moſt Higheſt haſt born for us ſo ſad and intollerable a load.

§. 10. *The length.*

We are now to meaſure the length of the Croſs, that is, the time of Chriſts bitter paſſion, the tedious duration of his ſufferings, which began with his birth and continued to his laſt breath. The Life of JESUS, as we have ſeen, was, as it were, a chain of miſeries, every link, every connection, had ſomething grievous and afflictive, *he was a Man of ſorrows*: therefore, we no where read that ever he laught or injoy'd the pleaſures and the mirth of this world: but that he ſuffer'd much and wept ſeveral times, is recorded by the Evangeliſts. Every day was, in ſome manner, the day of his Cru-

ciſixion (which to us is *Good*, but to him was ſad *Friday*:) for he knowing all along what he was to ſuffer, and living in expectation of that cruel death: we may ſay that his fears did, in ſome manner, prevent his murtherers, and by anticipation, acted upon him, while he liv'd, what they were to inflict on him to put him to death: for he was pleas'd to aſſume, together with our nature, our innocent paſſions and infirmities. *I have a Baptiſm* (ſaith he) *to be Baptiz'd with, and how am I conſtrain'd until it be accompliſhed*! that was the Baptiſm of his Blood, which he wiſht for, becauſe of his love to mankind, his great deſire of paying our ranſoms: but fear'd, becauſe of the repugnance of his humane nature, to ſuch bitter ſufferings; wherefore (ſaith he) συνέχομαι, I am conſtrained, I am in a ſtreight betwixt two, I wiſh, and yet I fear to die. But that which we moſt properly call his paſſion, becauſe it exceeded the reſt of his ſufferings, laſted eighteen hours, without intermiſſion, nine of *Thurſday-night*, and nine of *Friday*; from the time of his agony, in the garden, about nine at night,

night, while three in the afternoon of the day following; all that time he ſuffered thoſe ſeveral ſorts of pains and tortures, which are already mention'd; all that time, he drank full draughts of that bitter cup, the fear whereof made him ſweat drops of blood, when he began to taſte of it; all that time he ſuffered what no tongue can expreſs, but what all hearts ſhould indeavour to feel, and to think of daily. Lord JESU, thou wert tormented a long time, that we might not be tormented to all Eternity; grant that we may indure any thing for thee, and from thee our God, who didſt indure ſo much for men, and from men.

§. 11. *The depth.*

We have ſeen that bar of the Croſs, on which the hands of our Bleſſed Saviour were nail'd, *the breadth* and *the length*, that is, the variety and the tedioufneſs of the pains and ſufferings, he underwent for us? Now we are to conſider the biggeſt piece which ſtood upright, whereon his body reſted and his feet were nail'd; *the depth and the height*, that is, the pureneſs and the greatneſs of his ſorrows. If we read with

attention the paſſion of Chriſt in the four Goſpels, we ſhall ſee our Bleſſed Redeemer, as it were, ſunk into a deep abyſs of miſery, by the heavy burthen of our ſins; he might well cry by his Prophet, *See whether there is any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow?* for the greateſt of humane afflictions admit of many comforts, whereas he was depriv'd of all; as there was no part in us but was infected with ſin, there was none in him but was affected with pain; he was all over ſtripes and ſores, an univerſal wound within and without; he ſuffered in all his capacities, in his outward and inward ſenſes, in all the parts and faculties of his ſoul and body: the very circumſtances of his paſſion, did all concur to make it more bitter and afflictive. He was depriv'd of that ordinary comfort of being aſſiſted by his friends, all the Diſciples forſook him and fled; as the Prophet had foretold of him, *I have trodden the wine-preſs alone and of the people there* Iſa. 63. *was none with me; I looked and there was none to help, I wondred that there was none to uphold.* He was like a mild and defence-leſs lamb in the midſt of ravenous wolves, there were

were none about him, but ſuch as thirſted for his blood. And no wonder if man forſook him, when he was in ſome manner forſaken even by his Father. It pleaſed God to give him up to the cruelties of wicked men and the ſorrows of death; and that his Divine Nature, (though perſonally and inſeparably united to his humanity) ſhould for a time ſuſpend the effects of its beatifying union, and leave him, ſuffer as a man in ſoul and body, the greateſt pains, without the leaſt comforts. They that ſaw our Crucified Saviour ſuffer ſo patiently, as not to open his mouth to complain, might have thought that he had no ſenſe of pain: therefore he crys out ſo bitterly, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Why, doſt thou ſuffer me to be plung'd into this gulf of ſorrow, ſo that I have nothing but anguiſh within and without? Why doſt thou ſuffer me to be almoſt overwhelm'd by ſo great a diſtreſs, *and art ſo far from helping me and from the words of my complaint?* *Pſal.* 22. Lord, we had deſerved to ſink, and evermore to cry and groan in the bottomleſs pit: and to reſcue us, Thou art pleas'd to deſcend very low;

low: and *with ſtrong crying and tears*, to ſay, *de profundis clamavi, out of the depths have I cryed unto thee, O Lord hear my voyce*; be pleaſed to hear us deareſt Lord when we call upon thee, and make thy voice ſink into our hearts, and there find a cheerful admiſſion, and a conſtant and ſincere obedience.

Pſal. 130.

§. 12. *The height.* Now we have only the heigth of the Croſs to look on, that is, the ſublimity, the greatneſs of the torments of Chriſts crucifixion; that in this ſenſe his Croſs was very high, appears already by what hath been ſaid: and yet we may conſider further; that he being conceiv'd by the Holy Ghoſt of a moſt pure Virgin, was therefore of a moſt healthful conſtitution; ſo that his ſenſes, being very quick and apprehenſive, were ſenſible of pain beyond other men's: and ſo all the blows and wounds he receiv'd, and his being nail'd and ſtretch'd, three long hours on the Croſs, as upon the rack, muſt needs have been a moſt exquiſite torture. Alſo, the vigor of his nature being neither weakned nor ſpent, by age or diſtempers, he being

being full of ſtrength and in the flower of his age, was capable to taſte the ſmart and ſharpneſs of his pain, to the very laſt moment of his life: and ſo 'tis written by S. *Luke, that he cryed with a loud voice, when he gave up the ghoſt*, to ſhew that he was ſtill very ſtrong, and that his death was bitter and violent to extremity. There was likewiſe an inviſible Croſs, which afflicted his ſoul, and made it ſorrowful even unto death; *his heart was like wax, melted in the midſt of his bowels:* and in the midſt of ſo many and ſuch intollerable pains, his murtherers ſhook their heads, made mouthes at him, ſcoft at his ſorrows by cruel and inſulting mockeries, and by their tongues and deriſions aggravated thoſe ſufferings, which their hands could hardly increaſe; but that the Croſs of Chriſt was higher in the greatneſs of it's pains than that of any Martyr, of any man that ever ſuffered, is evident enough only by conſidering who it was, that was crucified on it: for it was more that JESUS, being perfect God as well as Man, ſhould ſhed one drop of blood, than that all Men and Angels ſhould for Millions of years

Pſal. 22.

years bear the greateſt torments. Lord we were wonderfully made by thy power, but we are yet more wonderfully redeem'd by thy mercy! Lord what is man, that thou ſhouldſt thus be mindful of him! or rather, what is man, that he is unmindful of thee!

§. 13. *What an infinite love is expreſt by the Croſs.*

Now we have ſeen the whole frame of the Croſs, writ all over in blood, with characters of love, expreſſions of the greateſt kindneſs, for a teſtimony that *JESUS* lov'd us unto death. Not any ſorrow or anguiſh in his ſoul, not any gap or wound in his body, but are as many mouthes to cry aloud in the ears of all men, Behold what manner of love, God had for his enemies, his ſinful and unworthy creatures, to ſuffer ſuch things, to die in ſuch a manner, for to redeem them and make them happy! Now let us, if we can comprehend, *the breadth and the length, the heigth and the depth* of the love of *JESUS*, that love which bound him much harder than the cords of the Jews, and nail'd him to his croſs much faſter than thoſe Irons which pierc't his hands and feet:

O dilectio quam magnum eſt vinculum tuum quo ligari potuit Deus. Idiot.

for

for he that could, with one word, caſt his enemies to the ground, could eaſily have broke their bands and eſcap't from them, but that his love did conſtrain him, and make him deſirous and willing, thus to die. What man would ſuffer one half of what Chriſt did, for his deareſt Benefactor? And then, how immenſe and wonderful was that charity which he expreſt in ſuffering the ignominy and pains of the Croſs, for thoſe that were his enemies and had highly injur'd him, and from whom he could expect no reward, but only to be lov'd again! Let us therefore remember it throughout this whole book, or rather throughout our whole life, that we have been redeem'd from eternal deſpair and miſery, and from our vain and ſinful converſation, not by *any corruptible thing, as ſilver and gold, but by the precious Blood of Chriſt*, ſhed with great pain and great ignominy.

§. 14.

Of the eternal happineſs Jeſus merited for us by his death.

This love of JESUS is more already by far, than ours can anſwer; Could our hearts burn perpetually with thoſe brighteſt flames of love which beatifie the Cherubims, could they

they contain all, the moſt paſſionate affections of all Saints, both in heaven and earth, yet we could not love *JESUS* ſo much as he deſerves, for having died to ſave us from eternal death: and yet he did more; he ſuffer'd death that we might have life, that we might have eternal life; Not only that we might not be intirely miſerable, but alſo that we might be perfectly happy. Heaven is the purchaſe of the Blood of Chriſt, as well as Redemption from hell; *God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, when we were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, hath quickned us together with Chriſt, and hath*
Epheſ.2.5. *rais'd us up, together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.* Let us meditate a while, upon that *far more exceeding and eternal*
2 Cor.4.17. *weight of glory reſerv'd in heaven for us,* and in it conſider the ſame dimenſions, as in the price wherewith it was bought, the Croſs of our Saviour: and it will greatly preſs and increaſe our obligations to love him.

It is καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης, as S. *Paul* calls it; each word is a part of its dimenſion. Firſt, the Breadth; it com-

pre-

prehends all joys and pleaſures, all things that are good and deſirable, all that can yield ſatisfaction, and create happineſs to a man: even that incomprehenſible and increated goodneſs, which is the inexhauſtible fountain of perfect Bliſs and Felicity; *in whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy, at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.* Secondly, It's Heigth. It is above the regions of the air, in the higheſt heavens; the ſublimity and greatneſs of it's glory, is expreſt, by being like the Angels of God; by ſhining forth as the Sun; by a kingdom, a crown incorruptible, a crown of life, and ſitting with the Son of God in his throne. Thirdly it's Depth. It is pure and unmingled, it admits of nothing afflictive: neither death nor ſorrow, neither hunger nor thirſt, neither pain nor anguiſh; *all tears are wip'd from their eyes.* There is the abſence of all evil and the preſence of all good; therefore 'tis called *the joy of our Lord*, than which, nothing can expreſs a greater: for God is intirely and perfectly happy, and ſo incapable of any ſorrow, that the leaſt ſight of the Beatifical viſion would turn hell

hell it ſelf into a paradiſe. Fourthly and laſtly, Its Length, It's never ceaſing duration; it admits of no end or period, it is everlaſting, it is eternal, it is for ever and ever; after as many millions of years as there is drops of water in the ſea, it will but begin: and after as many thouſands of millions more, it will be no neerer ending, then it was at firſt, ſtill eternal, and ever eternal. This is that Bliſs which we had forfeited by ſin, and are reintitled to by the paſſion of Chriſt; that Bliſs which if often and duly conſider'd, would make us deſpiſe the world, long for heaven, love affectionately, and ſerve diligently that JESUS who offers it to us, and died to purchaſe it: Wherefore S. *Paul* prays ſo earneſtly for the *Epheſians, that God would give them the Spirit of Wiſdom and revelation, the eyes of their underſtanding inlightned, that they might know what is the hope of his calling: and what the riches of his glory of his inheritance in the Saints.*

Epheſ. 1. 18

That we might once be poſſeſt of this bliſs, as well as deliver'd from hell, was the Cauſe why JESUS deſcended down from heaven, became poor, took on him the form of

of a Servant, and humbled himſelf unto death, even the death of the Croſs; *for the joy that was ſet before him, he deſpiſed the ſhame and endured the croſs*, ſaith S. *Paul*. That *joy*, we may ſay, was not the injoyment of heavenly bliſs, for himſelf; 'twas his without ſuffering; there was no need he ſhould bear the Croſs, for to obtain it, he had a ſure title to it by nature: *the joy* therefore *that was ſet before him*, was the joy of ſaving us, the joy of reſcuing us from the jaws of death, the gulf of eternal perdition; the joy of paying the price of our Redemption; the joy of making us capable of eternal joys; the joy of purchaſing the glories and felicities of heaven for us; in a word the joy of ſhewing us his love, and expecting the returns of ours. This was *the joy*, why, *he deſpiſed the ſhame*, becauſe his ſhame ſhould raiſe us to glory; this was *the joy*, why, *he indured the Croſs*, becauſe his Croſs ſhould exalt us to a happy and honourable Throne. Heb. 12. 2.

This meditation of the great and manifold benefits of God, and the wonderful love and charity, he hath ſhewed us, in JESUS, we may

may and ſhould proſecute much farther, in all inſtances: for 'tis infinite; and never enough to be conſider'd and admir'd. But Reader, if that little, I have here ſet down, doth not affect thee, and if being affected with it, thou doſt not reſolve to return to God, all poſſible acknowledgments and demonſtrations of a grateful love, then read no further: for, as what precedes is matter of mercy from Gods part, ſo what follows is matter of duty on thine. I ſhall now infer that we muſt love God, *becauſe he firſt loved us*; and that if the love of *JESUS* to us, hath made him bear our Croſs, our love to him muſt make us bear his yoke: if he died for us, becauſe he loved us, then we muſt live to him, to make it appear that we love him. *Our love to Chriſt* (ſaith an excellent late Author) *is not a ſubtil airy, and metaphyſical notion, as ſome repreſent it, but is a vital principle of action which governs our lives, and makes us fruitful in good works*: thus it ſhould be at leaſt, and thus I intend it, the tryal of love is obedience; *if ye love me* (ſaith our Bleſſed Saviour) *keep my Commandments.*

Hæc via a multis eſt vera non ficta: via cordialis, non verbalis: via fructuoſa non ocioſa: via non ſolùm ſermonis, ſed etiam operis. Idiot.

Sherl. 412.

Now

Now then we are to consider, that God giving knowledge of salvation to men, hath also thereby proclaim'd their duty: Manifesting his love, he hath ingag'd and requir'd theirs; as our being call'd to be Christians makes a great and real change, as to the happiness of our condition: a great and real change it ought also to make, as to the holiness of our conversation. Therefore S. *Paul* calls the Gospel, *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*, and he prays for the *Ephesians*, that they *might know the love of Christ, that so they might be fill'd with all the fulness of God:* as to say, that the knowledge of the love of Christ is exceeding powerful and efficacious, and would repleniſh them with all graces and vertues; for this cause he sets so high a value upon *the excellency of this knowledge, esteeming all the world but dung in comparison of it*; and he exhorting the *Cretians to be ready to every good work*, puts them in mind that they, who were once *disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts*, had been deliver'd from that unhappy condition *by the appearance of the love of God our Saviour towards man:* as in other places

§. 15. *What all these benefits require from us.*

Rom. 2. 16.

Ephes. 3. 18

Phil. 3. 8.

Tit. 3.

places, he exhorteth Chriſtians, *to walk worthy of their calling*; *worthy of the Goſpel*; thereby declaring that the manifeſtation of the Divine Love, in the Preaching of the Goſpel, was the promulgation, as of their happineſs, ſo of their duty: whereby they were reſcued, as well from living as from periſhing in their ſins. 'Tis *the* Tit. 2. 11. *appearance of that grace of God which bringeth ſalvation*, that teacheth men to live, *ſoberly, righteouſly and godly*: and 'tis the receiving and crediting that Heavenly Doctrine, that *quencheth the fiery darts of Satan, that purifies the heart, and overcomes the world*; ſo that the bare belief of the truth of the New Teſtament is a ſtrong and indiſpenſable obligation to a cheerful, univerſal, and perſevering obedience to all its precepts; the very profeſſion of being Chriſtians doth ſtrictly bind us to the performance of all Chriſtian duties. But the neceſſity of a Holy Faith and a Holy Life hath been ſo fully evinc'd and aſſerted, and *all things that pertain to life and godlineſs* ſo cleerly and learnedly explain'd by Catholick Writers Ancient and Modern, eſpecially many Pious Fathers and Sons of this Church,

Church, since the Reformation, that I shall not insist upon the fundamentals, either of Faith or Practice, to inforce it; As indeed my design is not to instruct, but to move the affections; not to argument or explain, but to draw inferences from known and granted premises, to administer prudential helps and Religious counsels, and by devout meditations to affect the heart.

§. 16. *An invitation unto the Cloister of love.*

I ask therefore; hast thou conceived a fair Idea of Christianity? hast thou observ'd the glory and greatness of it's Mysteries, the holiness of it's Doctrine, and the perfection of its precepts and counsels? hast thou consider'd and admir'd the great exemplar of all vertues, the Holy JESUS, author of this Holy Institution? hast thou read his life with an observing eye, and hast thou view'd the fair copies of this perfect Original, which have been drawn by many of his Saints, in the imitation of his example? hast thou weigh'd the excellency of his promises, the great immunities, and the invaluable advantages which belong to his followers? hast thou seriously ponder'd

ponder'd the great obligations which the love of *JESUS* hath laid upon thee? and art thou desirous to be happy by loving again, and being grateful? If so, enter this Cloister, love *JESUS* and thou shalt reign with *JESUS*.

The Cloister I mean is not the precinct of a particular *Abbey*, or the confinement of a narrow Cell, but the Catholick Church, whose inclosure is large enough to entertain all the *Religions* in the world, all that are of the Christian Order: And the Rule I would have thee follow, is not that of any Founders, nor even that of *Pachomius* said to have been brought down by Angels: but that which the Son of God himself delivered, the Gospel-rule, the Christian Laws and appointments, *hath not God given his Beloved Son, the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession?* Why then (saith *Erasmus*) "Should we confine the excellency and perfection "of Christianity to particular places?

Psal. 2.

Cur sic arctemus Christi professionem quam ille latissime voluit patere & ego certe sic optarim Evangelicam Religionem sic omnibus esse cordi, &c. Ench.

"Why,

"Why ſhould we make that ſhort and "narrow which Chriſt would have "to be of an univerſal extent? If it "be words we affect, is not a City "a great Monaſtery, the Abbot where-"of is the Biſhop, ſet over it by "Chriſt? Would to God the Chriſti-"an Rule were ſo well belov'd and "obſerv'd that no man might look "or deſire the *Benedictin* or *Fran-"ciſcan*. I ſay ſo too, all this is true and to be wiſhed: yet the univer-ſal comprehends many particular Churches, and the Chriſtian Rule hath alſo many ſeveral interpreta-tions: therefore to be plain and poſi-tive; the Church of *England* (as the pureſt part, or member of the Ca-tholick; which hath repurg'd cor-rupt innovations, and maintains a Bleſſed Conformity with Antiquity) is that which I recommend to thee above all others: and for the beſt interpretation of the Sacred Canon, the Doctrine and Worſhip of this Church is that, which I would have thee prefer to all the reſt.

§. 17.

The vow to be taken at the entrance of it.

But (becauſe I ſpeak not to diſ-ſenters, nor intend to diſpute with them) thou wilt ſay, that thou haſt

entred this Cloiſter already, and haſt undertaken it's Rule; but though it be ſo, thou mayſt do it the ſecond time, by a ſecond choiſe, an after-election. Thou didſt not come of thy ſelf but waſt brought in, when firſt thou entred'ſt this ſociety, and 'twas by a proxy thou promiſedſt to obſerve the orders of it: therefore now that thou haſt the uſe of reaſon, 'tis very neceſſary thou ſhouldſt do it again, by a free and conſiderate act of thine own will. Ratifie then thy former ingagements by being confirm'd, if thou art not, and if thou art, by a hearty and ſincere indeavour to perform thy vows and promiſes, which are as follows. Firſt, *To renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, with all covetous deſires of the ſame, and the ſinful luſts of the fleſh.* Secondly, *To believe all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith.* And thirdly, *To keep Gods Holy Will, and Commandments, and walk in the ſame all the days of thy life.*

Quod ſummum eſt id omnibus eſt enitendum ut ſaltem mediocria aſſequamur, nec eſt quod ullum vitæ genus ab hoc ſcopo ſubmoveamus, &c. Eraſ.

This vow contains all thy duty, the higheſt pitch of Chriſtian perfection, rules

rules for the moſt Regular and Spiritual Life; let thy ſerious application, and earneſt indeavour to obſerve it, diſcriminate and ſever thee from the prophane and leſs Religious world: Thou needeſt no diſtinct incloſure, no diſtinct habits, no diſtinct patrons or offices, thy ſincere Study, thy Religious care to diſcharge this obligation, will ſufficiently cloiſter thee in, from the looſer ſociety and converſation of men, and will make a difference great enough betwixt thee and them.

But though thou doſt remain in the civil ſociety of the world, and the neighborhood of thy neighbour: yet various are the ways that lead through the world to heaven, and here I undertake to teach thee a ſure and ſhort one, through which all glorified Saints have paſt. Some perſons here, are eminent in one vertue, ſome in another: ſome are guided by hope and ſome by fear: Many different are the conſiderations and helps whereby men are brought to make themſelves happy in doing their duty:

Qui timendo non facit male, male faceret ſi liceret: itaque etſi facultas non datur, voluntas retinetur. Auguſt. in Pſal. 32.

but the motive, the guide, the way, the inſtrument I recommend to thee above all others, is Love. Love is the ſtrongeſt motive, the ſureſt guide, the ſafeſt way, the beſt inſtrument in the world: to live well, to keep thee from wandring, to bring thee to heaven, to conquer all oppoſitions, and do the work of God thoroughly. Love hath a general intendance over all vertues and duties, and makes them pleaſant to us, and acceptable to God. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* Love, and thou canſt never do amiſs; love and thou canſt never miſcarry.

Dilectio eſt via rectiſſima abſque devio: via brevis abſque tædio: via plana abſque tumulo: via clara abſque nubilo: via ſecura abſque periculo, &c. Idiot. Cont.

§. 18. *Of Love, and firſt of Self-love.*

Love is the common prince and parent of other paſſions, as they all take their Laws, ſo they take their Origine from it: Or, to ſpeak more properly, love it ſelf is all paſſions, and it obtains ſeveral different names, according to its ſeveral acts and objects. "Love (ſaith S. *Aug.*) is cal-"led deſire, when it gaſps after its "beloved object; when 'tis poſſeſt of it,

Amor inhians habere quod amatur, cupiditas eſt; idem habens eoque fruens, lætitia eſt; fugiens quod ei adverſatur timor eſt; idq; cum acciderit ſentiens, triſtitia eſt. Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. 14. c. 7.

"it, it takes another denomination, "and is call'd joy or pleaſure, when "it flies from what it abhors, it "hath the name of fear; and 'tis "called ſorrow, when what it fear'd "overtakes it: But ſtill love is the only paſſion: deſire, anger, joy and ſorrow, hope and fear are either the motions or acts: or elſe the accidents of it. This clearly ſhews the great power and activity of this noble paſſion: for 'tis well known that the greateſt, and indeed all humane actions that are free, proceed from theſe natural affections, and ſo are the effects of love. There is no need to diſtinguiſh the ſeveral ſorts thereof, declaring that love is, either natural or ſupernatural, ſenſual or ſpiritual, of friendſhip or of intereſt; for all theſe are the ſame faculty, or paſſion in man, differing in their principles or objects only; neither would it much avail to give and explain accurate and ſtudied definitions of love, which is much better felt than expreſt, and much better declar'd by actions than words: it will be more uſeful to conſider, that, as love is the principle of all paſſions, ſo it is of all vertues and vices. This

fountain ſendeth forth the cleareſt and the fouleſt ſtreams; and like all other things, the greater its excellency, the worſe is its abuſe: ſo that it ſhould be our greateſt care, to uſe it well, and ſet it upon the right object.

No joy in enjoyment without love, without it no pleaſure in fruition: it is the great inſtrument of happineſs, if we place it aright, and it brings the greateſt infelicities if we miſplace it. 'Tis a miſguided love that makes men vicious, that cauſeth all the diſorders in the world: becauſe men love themſelves more than God; and ſo would be Gods to themſelves, the Authors of their own happineſs, expecting their greateſt felicities, either from their bodies as the ſenſual *Epicures*, or from their minds, as the proud *Stoicks*. Hence it is, that in the head of a long catalogue of the blackeſt ſins, S. *Paul* ſets ſelf-love as the cauſe, and origine of all the reſt: ſaying, that in *the worſt and moſt perilous times, Men ſhould be lovers of* 2 *Tim.* 3. 2. *their own ſelves*, and again, that they 4. ſhould be *lovers of pleaſure, more than lovers*

lovers of God; which, being the greateſt depravation of the underſtanding and of the will of men, plungeth men into the greateſt ſins, and thence into the greateſt miſeries. Certain it is that piety or true goodneſs conſiſteth in willingly ſubmitting ones ſelf to the Divine Pleaſure, either to ſuffer or obey: and certain it is that ſelf-love will admit of neither, it makes a man uncapable of Religion, the Eſſence whereof is to deny our own, to comply with God's Will: and ſo inſtead of that *Godlineſs*, *Juſtice* and *Sobriety* which are the three generals comprehenſive of all Religious duties, this muddy head-ſpring, *ſelf-love*, ſends forth three muddy ſtreams, which cauſe *the overflowing of ungodlineſs*, and almoſt drown the world under a deluge of wickedneſs. Theſe be the love of ſenſual pleaſures, call'd voluptuouſneſs; the love of Riches, call'd covetouſneſs, and the vain-glorious love of honour, call'd pride or ambition. Theſe three are diſclaim'd and renounc'd by all Chriſtians in the firſt part of their Baptiſmal vow: for the love of them confounds the world and all Religion; makes men criminal in ſouls,

bodies, and eſtates, and is the great enemy to their reſt and ſalvation. Therefore S. *John* who calls theſe *the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life*, gives us this neceſſa-
1 *Joh.* 2. 15. ry caution; *love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him*; that is, as our
Mat. 6. 24. Bleſſed Saviour ſaith, *no man can ſerve two maſters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one and deſpiſe the other: ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon.*
1 *Kings* 18. 21. There is no *halting betwixt God and Baal*, the one or the other muſt be acknowledged for Lord; there cannot be two contrary Sovereigns together; and the ſame thing can't be granted to two ſeveral competitors; if we love the world it reigns in our hearts and God is excluded: if we give our love to the world, we cannot poſſibly give it to God alſo; ſo then the love of our ſelves is concupiſcence, the mother of all ſin and impurity, and the love of God is grace or charity, the fountain of all holines and vertue: and theſe two, according as

Amor motus eſt cordis qui cum ſe inordinate movet, cupiditas dicitur: cum vero ordinatus eſt charitas apellatur. Aug. de ſubſt. dil. c. 2.

as they are predominant in men, make here the diſtinction betwixt the penitent and the impenitent, betwixt the juſt and the unjuſt: and will make the great difference hereafter, betwixt thoſe that ſhall dwell in the imbraces of the God of love to eternity, and thoſe that ſhall *dwell with everlaſting burning*; for every man is what he loves, (as S. *Auguſtine* ſaith) the irreſiſtible power of that mighty paſſion doth in ſome manner transform him, into that which his love imbraceth: and therefore to know whether a man be good or bad, we inquire not what he knows or what he believes, but what he doth love: being ſure that his morals are of the ſame nature as his love; becauſe his deſires and actions are all guided by it.

Talis eſt quiſque qualis eſt dilectio ejus; terram diligis, terra es, &c. Aug. Tract. 2. in 1 Joh.

§. 19.

How they that will be profeſt lovers of JESUS *muſt mortifie ſelf-love.*

This makes it our greateſt duty, as it is our greateſt intereſt, to rule by reaſon and Religion that paſſion which certainly will rule over us, to ſet our love upon the right object,

upon God, not upon our ſelves. Not that we ſhould, or can be our own enemies, and ſeek our own ruine; *no man ever yet hated his own fleſh*, ſaith S. *Paul*; the worſt of *Miſanthropes* are kind to themſelves: and we may as ſoon loſe our being, as the deſire of our well-being; and indeed, as we ſhould have, in the ſtate of innocency, ſo we may ſtill love our ſelves in God: only God muſt be preferr'd before all; and 'tis impoſſible we ſhould be happy, but in loving him above all things, with all our hearts and ſouls; but now that we are in a ſtate of ſin and depravation, there muſt be a dereliction of our natural deſires and affections, a renunciation to our own wills: that we may comply with the will of God, and be guided by his Divine Laws. In the time of man's integrity, God was to be regarded and loved firſt and moſt of all, ſo it muſt be ſtill: the difference is, that then man did it naturally, and now by a ſupernatural aſſiſtance: he did it then by the grace of his Original Righteouſneſs, and now by the grace of the Goſpel; he did it then without reluctancy, now he hath ſinful appetites and paſſions.

Epheſ. 29.

ſions which he muſt deny and mortifie, before he can do it. Therefore our Bleſſed Saviour requires it, at the very entrance of his Schoøl, as a neceſſary qualification to all that will be his Diſciples, that they ſhould deny themſelves and hate all things in compariſon of him: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his croſs daily and follow me: and again if any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and ſiſters, and his own life alſo, he cannot be my Diſciple*; that is, he that will own JESUS, and be own'd by him, muſt in all things give him the preeminence; muſt relinquiſh his natural deſires, deny his own will, that he may yield an humble obedience to God; he muſt forſake all things that come in competition with him; and even part with his deareſt relations and his own life, (as though he hated them) rather than commit what God hath forbidden, or diſclaim what he would have us profeſs; this ſelf-abnegation, this daily ſelf-crucifixion is no act of hatred, as the world might think: but the greateſt kindneſs we can ſhew to our

Luk. 9.13. 14.20.

Ille ſatis ſe diligit qui ſedulò agit ut ſummafruatur bono.

our ſelves or others: as he that cuts off one of his limbs, hates not himſelf, but ſeeks the preſervation of his body; and he that caſts his goods over-board, hates them not, but prefers his ſafety to them: ſo in this caſe, he that parts with his earthly injoyments, hates them not, but prefers heaven to this earth; he that loſeth this preſent life, hates it not, but loves eternal life beyond it; and he that forſakes his friends or parents to follow his Saviour, hates them not, but loves *JESUS* above them, and ſeeks to win them to *JESUS*. In this caſe the promiſe is verified, that he that parts with any thing for Chriſts ſake, receives an hundredfold, in compenſation: and he that loſeth his life, certainly finds it; Therefore, hating our kindred and our own lives, is otherwiſe expreſt in S. *Matthew*; *he that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me*, &c. As much as to ſay, that it is only requir'd, that the love of God ſhould be predominant; that *JESUS* ſhould be dearer to us, than all perſons whatever; and that, in the firſt place, we ſhould love God with all our minds, with all our ſtrength

Mat. 10. 37.

ſtrength and with all our ſouls: for then afterwards, the love of our ſelves and others being ſubordinate would become regular and innocent.

§. 20. *Of the love of God.*

Now as all ſins and miſeries proceed from a miſplaced love; ſo all vertues and felicities are the product of love well-guided, and plac'd on the right object; this is as beneficial and advantageous, as the other is pernicious: that is, (as S. *Auguſtine* ſaith) that as ſelf-love is the root of all evil, ſo the love of God, is the root of all good, the ſtock whence all vertues do grow. The excellency of Divine Love is ſo great, ſo tranſcendent, that it alone is accepted on its own account, and all other things for its ſake; a faith ſtrong enough to work miracles, alms the moſt expenſive, and even the flames of Martyrdom profit nothing without love, as S. *Paul* teacheth; love it is that makes all good works meritorious in the beſt ſenſe; love it is that gives a value to all other vertues;

Sicut radix omnium malorum eſt cupiditas: ita radix omnium bonorum eſt charitas. Serm. de Charit.

Sine charitate fides poteſt eſſe; ſed non prodeſſe. Aug. 1 Cor. 13.

tues; or rather, it is love that produceth all good works and vertues, as they are ſo indeed. Love is the diſcharge of our whole duty, *the fulfilling of the law*, ſaith S. *Paul*; love is that grace which renews and ſanctifies our natures and *abides for ever*; it is the greateſt, the moſt excellent gift of God; it is even the Divine Spirit, who unites all things within the bonds of love and unity, ſaith S. *Auguſtine*, and with whom all good things are ever given. Divines teach that the Holy Ghoſt proceeds from the Father and the Son, by way of love; wherefore he is call'd, *nexus amoris quo conjungitur Pater cum Filio, & Filius cum Patre*; that is, in the Language of the Church, that in the Unity of the ſame Spirit the Father and the Son live and reign evermore; or, as S. *Auguſtine* expreſſeth it, the love wherewith the Father and the Son love mutually is the Holy Spirit, and repreſents beſt the Myſtery of their Incomprehenſible Union.

Rom. 13. 10

Unitas Spiritus continet omnia. Serm. Pent.

Donum eſt Spiritus Sanctus in quo nobis omnia bona dantur.

Charitas qua pater diligit filium & filius patrem, quæ eſt Spiritus Sanctus, ineffabilem communionem amborum demonſtrat. De Trin. l. 15.

Now

Now that Divine Spirit, which is the eternal love of God to himſelf, is given to us, in the grace of love or charity (which are one and the ſame) whereby we are all joyn'd together into one body, and all united to God; therefore in our holding Communion with the Church, we are commanded to keep *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*; and we are taught, that *the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given to us*; and that *the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt are all one*: ſo that to come to the higheſt pitch, and finiſh the *elogium* of love, we may ſay with S. *John*, that *God is love*, and then we have ſaid all. *God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him*, that is, God is an abyſs of love and goodneſs; by love he gives himſelf to us, and by love we give up our ſelves to him, and are transformed into him. Wonder not therefore, if the effects of love are ſo glorious and wonderful, when it

Epheſ. 4.3. *Rom.* 5.5. 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. 1 *Joh.* 4.16.

Deus charitas eſt: brevis laus ſed magna laus: brevis in ſermone & magna in intellectu, &c. Aug. Tract. 9. in Ep. Joh.

proceeds

proceeds immediately from God, and is the communication of himſelf to us; when it is the grace of Jeſus Chriſt, and the moſt precious gift of the Divine Spirit; when it is the Sanctification of our natures, and the bettering and perfecting of the nobleſt of humane affections, natural love, that powerful paſſion whereby all things and all men are govern'd.

§. 21.

Of the properties of love. The firſt.

Ineffabilem prorſus ego ſentio amorem Dei; & qui ſentiri magis quam dici poſſit. Baſil.

Though the properties of love in general be better known by experience than they can be by diſcourſe: yet it may ſerve to good purpoſe to ſay ſomething of them; the firſt whereof is, that love always imbraceth what is good, either in truth or appearance: for Man's inclinations are ſtill the ſame, as they were in the ſtate of innocence; though much depraved: we ſtill purſue after what we think will make us happy; only we miſtake. Like the bramble in the fable, which having loſt a rich freight of the fineſt ſilks, and now takes hold of the coarſeſt ſtuffs, to recover its loſs; ſo have all men

men a ſecret ſenſe, that they are faln from a ſtate of felicity, and have loſt a jewel of infinite value, which ſtill they eſteem and love, though they know it not: and therefore now, to recover the eminency of their firſt ſtation, they are climbing upon every mole-hill, petty mountains of ambition; to recover their loſt jewel, they pick up every pebble ſtone; where they ſee a glimpſe of beauty, where they reliſh any thing of goodneſs, there they ſet their love and affection, as if that were the *ſummum bonum*, which is but an imperfect ſhadow of it; ſo that we are like an infortunate lover, who, being ſeiz'd by a phrenſy, forgets and forſakes his Miſtreſs, and dotes on her picture. We neglect God, and fall in love with thoſe things that have the leaſt impreſs of his perfection: and then, like Idolaters we pay that worſhip to the work, which is due to the maker only.

Therefore ought we to take great heed, that we be not taken with every ſeeming beauty or goodneſs: but that we examine whether that be the thing which will make us intirely happy, and beyond which we ſhall wiſh

wiſh for nothing. For, if it be not, we muſt paſs it by, and ſeek further, and never reſt, nor ſet our hearts on any thing, till we have found that true and perfect good, moſt obvious and eaſie to be found, which being lov'd will be certainly poſſeſt, and being poſſeſt will make us perfectly happy; and that is God alone. It is the meditation of S. *Auguſtine*, "Thou maiſt ſeek "after honours and not "obtain them; thou maiſt "labour for riches, and "remain poor; thou maiſt "dote on pleaſures, and "have many ſorrows: but "our God, the Supreme Goodneſs "ſaith, Who, ever ſought me, and "found me not? who, ever deſir'd "me, and obtain'd me not? who, "ever lov'd me, and miſt of me? I "am with him that ſeeks for me; he "hath me already that wiſheth for "me; and he that loveth me is ſure "of me: the way to come to me is "neither long nor difficult; love "makes me preſent to every lover.

Amaturus & honorem & forte non perventurus: --- quis me amavit & non ad me pervenit? --- quiſquis me quærit cum ipſo ſum, &c. Tract. 10. in Ep. Johan.

§. 22. A ſecond property of love is; that it never reſts and is never ſatisfied, until

The ſecond.

until it be poſſeſt of the beloved object; This makes abuſed worldlings ſo buſie, ſo perpetually reſtleſs and active about the purchaſe of their beloved vanities: and this makes devout Chriſtians, like S. *Paul*, never to count themſelves to have apprehended: but forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to thoſe that are before, to preſs forward towards the mark, the price of their high calling, the object of their love and moſt paſſionate deſires. This reſtleſsneſs and activity of love found work enough for the Fathers of the Deſarts; whoſe indefatigable pains to mortifie their ſinful appetites; whoſe unwearied diligence to ſerve God; whoſe ſwift and violent motion heaven-ward is the object of our wonder, and upbraids our ſloth and negligence. They were almoſt wholy freed from the neceſſities of the body, which is the endleſs task and work of other men, and yet they were always imploy'd; they had almoſt nothing to do, and yet were never idle; the love of Eternity, the love of *JESUS* kept them in action; they dwelt in peace, and yet were never at reſt. *Phil.* 3.

Our

Our heart, which is the ſeat of love, can never be quiet, till it returns within Gods imbraces, till it be poſſeſt of that infinite good, which all men love, though but a few know it. See the ſeveral plots and undertakings of men in the world, 'tis love ſets them at work: 'tis to obtain what their blind affections run after, that they are ſo aſſiduous and ſo laborious. See the prayers and pious exerciſes, the ſelf-denial and mortifications, the manifold acts of charity and the great patience of Chriſtians in the Church: 'tis love alſo hath ſet them their task and makes them ſo diligent ſo watchful till they have fulfil'd it. We ſometimes wipe the tears from our eyes, and our ſorrows admit of joyful intervals; our anger doth not laſt always, and ſometimes hatred is aſleep: but love like the heart wherein it dwells, can never ceaſe to act and move till it ceaſeth to be, where ever love is, it ſhews it's life and power, and is always doing.

Habet omnis amor vim ſuam, nec poteſt vacare amor, in anima amantis. Aug.

§. 23. *The third.* In the third place, as love is active, ſo it is effective; it doth not ſpend it ſelf in uſeleſs and inſignificant attempts;

tempts; it's ſtrength is great, as well as it's indeavours. Great are the dangers and difficulties which love overcomes; it carries the ambitious lover of honour through many uneaſie perils to a fading laurel; it carries the covetous lover of riches through the moſt hard and ſlaviſh labours, to his falſe and treacherous mammon; and it carries likewiſe the devout lover of *JESUS* through obedience and ſelf-humiliation, through briers and uneaſie croſſes, through patience and the greateſt ſufferings to the injoyment of his Beloved. Love can do all things, ſince it brought God down from heaven to become man, and die for man. *who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* ſaith S. *Paul*, *Shall tribulation or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? nay, in all theſe things we are more then conquerors, through him that loved us; for I am perſwaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*; As much as to ſay, *Rom.* 8. 35, &c.

ſay, that the power of love is irreſiſtible, that it anſwers all objections and conquers all obſtacles: notwithſtanding mans high provocations and great unworthineſs, love made the Almighty lay down the arms of his juſt vengeance, and open his boſom of mercy, to give his dear and onely Son to man for
Joh.3.16. a Saviour; *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life.* And likewiſe man is enabled or rather forc't by love to do and ſuffer any thing; as ſoon as Divine Love enters a mans heart, of proud, it makes him humble; of luſtful and intemperate, it makes him chaſte and ſober; of covetous, it makes him charitable; of dainty and effeminate it makes him a Martyr. No ill habits ſo deeply rooted, but love can pluck them up; no croſs ſo heavy but love can bear it. *Many waters can-*
Cant.8.7. *not quench love* (ſaith *Solomon*) *neither can the floods drown it.* No, the ſtrongeſt torrent of affliction is but like drops of water ſprinkled upon the fire, it increaſeth the flames and
6. ardency thereof. *Love is as ſtrong as death,*

death, and death is very ſtrong, ſtronger than all viſible creatures. We daily fight againſt death and beat it back; by reſt and food and Phyſick, we diſpute the victory with it many years; but it is ever victorious at laſt; ſo is love, it never gives over, till it hath conquer'd all oppoſitions; it's courage increaſeth together with difficulties; the more obſtacles in its way, the greater it's indeavours, the more fierce it's contentions. Death ſevers a man from himſelf, and diſunites what ſeems inſeparable: love alſo takes the lovers ſoul from him and unites it to the beloved, ſo that he lives more in what he loves than in himſelf; *love is as ſtrong as death*; Death converts the greateſt ſinners, or at leaſt keeps them from ſinning at all, any longer: ſo doth love, it certainly mortifies all, even the moſt reigning ſins, it will not ſuffer them to ſin that love God. We can tame wild beaſts by induſtry; overcome the barrenneſs of the earth by labour; reſiſt the angry elements by Art and Phyſick; no evil

Magnum verbum fortis ut mors dilectio; magnificentius exprimi non potuit fortitudo charitatis, quis enim morti reſiſtat? ignibus undis, ferro, regibus reſiſtitur, venit una mors, quis ei reſiſtit? nihil illa fortius, propterea viribus ejus charitas comparatur. Aug. in Pſal. 121.

evil but hath a remedy, only death hath none, there is no ſtriving againſt it: ſo that nothing can better expreſs the irreſiſtible power of love, than to ſay that it is *as ſtrong as death.*

§. 24. *The fourth.* The laſt property of love I ſhall now mention, is, that love ſweetens bitter things, makes our labours pleaſant, and even our ſufferings delightful. How heavy is that yoke which is impos'd by an ungrateful hand! the Souldier preſt to the ſervice can hardly bear his arms: but he that is inrol'd by love thinks them light and bears them with pleaſure; the ſlave that works in the Mines counts his very life a burthen: the niggard that works much harder likes well his drudgery, becauſe the love of riches is his task-maſter; he that ſerves his maſter out of fear works faintly and with a heavy heart: he that ſerves him out of love, doth it diligently and yet with chearfulneſs; the Chriſtian pilgrim who is driven heaven-ward with fears and terrors, goeth on with much reluctancy, and a ſorrowful heart: he that is *drawn with the cords of love*, follows with joyfulneſs, minds

minds not the ruggedneſs of his way, and even rejoyceth in his wearineſs, becauſe it brings him nearer and nearer to his beloved: he that could ſay, *the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us*, could ſay alſo, *we rejoyce in tribulations*; 'Twas the love of JESUS made primitive Chriſtians work hard and ſuffer much, with comfort and unſpeakable joy: and 'tis for want of that ſweet and Divine Love that Chriſtians now find ſorrow and great difficulty in that little they do or ſuffer for JESUS. The labours of love are ever pleaſant; nothing is hard, that love binds upon us.

Nullo modo ſunt onerosi labores amantium, ſed etiam ipſi delectant, ſicut venantium, piſcantium: intereſt ergo quid ametur: nam in eo quod amatur, aut non laboratur, aut labor amatur. Aug.

§. 25. *A farewel to all ſinful deſires.* *Heb.* 6. 10.

Theſe conſiderations are now to be reduc'd into practice; And ſo I come to enter upon *the work and labour of love*; I come to profeſs my ſelf a lover of JESUS, and ſo to approve my ſelf by deeds and actions. The love of JESUS hath prevail'd; I find my heart wounded; I can no longer reſiſt the charms of his love; he hath woed me ſo long, and with ſo much kindneſs,

that now my heart is his; I will *love him, becauſe he firſt loved me*. Now it repenteth me that ever I rejected his ſute, that ever I was unkind to him; it grieveth me that ever I countenanc'd and prefer'd his rivals, the luſts of ſenſuality, covetouſneſs, and pride, which I renounc'd in my Baptiſm; I will now exclude them wholly; this is the firſt mark *JESUS* ſhall receive of my ſincere affection to him, that I will entertain nor careſs no longer thoſe his enemies, with whom I have had an unhappy intelligence for too long a time; henceforth, if they come near me, I will indeavour to drive them away; if they come after me, I will flee; if they perſevere in their attempts, they ſhall get nothing elſe, but ſhame and denials. Away from me then, ye wicked ſpirits, with all your tempting allurements, worldly vanities, deceitful riches, ſenſual pleaſures; I remember that I renounc'd you all, when firſt I gave up my name to *JESUS*, when he firſt began to ſhew and ſeal his love to me, and to ingage mine I then renounc'd *the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with*

with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh; I now remember those my ingagements, and grieve that I have not kept them: and therefore will hate you the more; that you made me forget my promises, and break my holy vows. Now will I be reveng'd of you, ye proud and ambitious designs, lustful thoughts, greedy desires of wealth; I will now kill and crucifie you. Henceforth, it shall be my honour, that I am a Servant of JESUS; it shall be my delight and pleasure, that I am a lover of JESUS; and it shall be my wealth, that he is mine as I am his. JESUS hath done and suffered much to declare his love and to deserve mine; he hath come down from heaven, and humbled himself to my mean and low condition; he hath liv'd poor and despised; he hath been afflicted and persecuted; he hath died for me; *hereby I know that he loves me, because he laid down his life for me*, but ye his unworthy rivals never gave me any assurance of your affection, never did, or suffered any thing for me. JESUS expos'd himself to shame, that I might become

glorious; indur'd pains, that I might have pleaſures; he became poor, that I might be enrich'd: but covetouſneſs offers me riches, to pierce me through with many ſorrows; luſt inticeth me, to wound me, when I have conſented to it; and pride promiſeth me honors, to cumber me and expoſe me to envy. *JESUS* is infinitely lovely, he is all perfection and goodneſs; and he deſires to be loved, not for any advantage of his own, but to make his lovers intirely and eternally happy: but you painted idols of abuſed mortals, are in your ſelves ugly, and even loathſome; though at a great diſtance, ye may ſeem ſomewhat fair, yet near at hand, ye are nothing but deformity; ye always prove vain and vexatious; ye ſeek to enter mens hearts, only to tyrannize and torment them, and betray them to eternal ſorrows. *JESUS* is a true and conſtant lover, he ever owns his friends: he never fails them that love him; he helps them in their diſtreſſes; he comforts them in their ſorrows; and when they die he ſtands by them: but ye temporal deceitful pleaſures, are falſe and incon-

conſtant; ye forſake your friends in their greateſt need; ye flatter them for a few Summer days, while the Sun ſhines kindly upon them; but in the rigors of Winter, when an unproſperous ſtorm ariſeth, you are gone, ye leave them to die comfortleſs; they carry nothing of you, when they go from hence, but the bitter remembrance of your treacherouſneſs. JESUS is a moſt grateful lover, he ever returns love for love; he is ever found of them that ſeek him; to them that deſire him he ever gives himſelf; every true lover of JESUS is ſure to injoy him: but you worldly injoyments are generally moſt unkind to your moſt paſſionate lovers; ye flee from them that run after you; ye grieve and vex your greateſt admirers, ye are ever uncertain, falſe and ungrateful. I will therefore never love you again; nay, I reſolve to hate and perſecute you; to mortifie the luſts of my fleſh; to humble the pride of my heart, and overcome the covetous deſires of my mind: but JESUS ſhall reign in my heart; him will I love; him will I ſerve; him will I indeavour to pleaſe in all

things; I will be wholly his; therefore I renounce all friendſhip with you that are his enemies; there can be no agreement betwixt the Holy *JESUS* and this ſinful world; *If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him.*

1 *Joh.*2.15

§. 26. *Of the antipathy betwixt ſin and Jeſus.*

Fleſhly luſts are againſt the purity of *JESUS*; pride is againſt his humility; and wordly-mindedneſs contrary to his heavenly promiſes and his mercifulneſs. Theſe are never to be reconcil'd with *JESUS*: they are mortal enemies, mortal I may call them, becauſe they were his murtherers, or rather, becauſe he died to put them to death; *we were not redeem'd with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold from our vain converſation, but with the precious blood of Chriſt*: *JESUS* ſhed his blood to redeem us, as well from the practice and commiſſion, as from the puniſhment and deſtruction of ſin. Nay, the firſt is that which he chiefly deſign'd, becauſe, though we ſhould not be puniſh'd, yet if we remain in ſin, we are unhappy: holineſs being the ultimate end, perfection, and happineſs of man

man. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart*, for *without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God.* S.*Paul* therefore ſaying that *Chriſt died unto ſin*, that is, to take away ſin, infers from thence, *that we being baptized into Chriſts death, our old man is now crucified, that the body of ſin might be deſtroy'd, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin*; and S.*Peter* likewiſe makes it the purpoſe, why *Chriſt did bear our ſins* (their puniſhment) *on his own body, on the tree, that we* thereby *being dead unto ſin might live unto righteouſneſs.* Chriſt *gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from this preſent evil world. The Son of God was manifeſted that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil.* Sin is that which God hates above all things: ſin is that which is moſt contrary to his nature, and to our happineſs; and ſo JESUS was crucified, that ſin might be deſtroy'd, he died that ſin might live no longer: and therefore I renounc'd all ſin, the Devil and all his works, when JESUS own'd me for his friend and I own'd him for my Lord and Maſter, they are incompatible, their inconſiſtency is irreconcilable; *if I hold to the one, I*

Rom. 6.

1 *Pet.* 2. 24

Gal. 1. 4.

1 *Joh.* 3. 8.

muſt deſpiſe the other; if I love one, I muſt hate the other. I will therefore, as I am moſt bound, and as I have promis'd, forſake ſin and follow *JESUS*; I will fight againſt his enemies, and ſide with him againſt my own corrupt affections; while I have a being, I will love and obey *JESUS*.

§. 27. *Of outward helps and means.* Now, To effect this, means are to be us'd; for our hearts will not of a ſudden be brought to a Religious temper; 'tis not bare reſolutions will make us reſiſt temptations when they aſſault us, with their moſt prevailing inticements, grace indeed is never wanting to us: but if we be wanting to our ſelves, we receive it in vain: if we ſecond it not with our indeavours, we make it ineffectual. Now among private means of grace (for I ſpeak not of thoſe that may be had in the Church, in the diſpenſation of the word and Sacraments belonging to all) faſting, alms, and prayers, which are alſo acts of Religion may hold the firſt rank. But beſides them, there are other *adminicula pietatis*, inſtruments of holy contrition, handmaids to devotion,

votion, which, though they be indifferent, and uncommanded, yet may help to move our affections, and ſecure our duty. Such are retirement from the world, reading of good Books, pious Meditations, humble proſtrations, *&c.* And (though needleſs ſcruples and rejecting of Ancient Ceremonies, be now much in uſe and credit, yet) amongſt them I will reckon, the ſign of the Croſs, which was certainly us'd by Primitive Chriſtians very frequently, and yet without ſuperſtition; thereby to vouch it to others, and even to themſelves, that they own'd JESUS Chriſt crucified for their Lord and Saviour: as alſo it was made upon our fore-heads in Holy Baptiſm, *in token that we ſhould not be aſhamed to profeſs the faith of Chriſt crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, againſt ſin, the world, and the devil*, &c. And to the ſame purpoſe we may uſe it on our ſelves again, to teſtifie that we own the profeſſion we then made, and tacitely to confirm and renew our vows of obedience, and fidelity; not to conjure away ſpirits, and work ſuch feats as many intend it for, in the Church of.

Caro ſignatur ut anima muniatur. Tert.

of *Rome*: but to ſtrengthen our good reſolutions, by moving and affecting our hearts. Certain it is that nothing palpable or viſible may in this life, be the object of our worſhip; it may have ſome power on the heart as well as what comes in by the ear; but though it have the warrant of antiquity, yet it may not ſerve any further than only to ſtir up our dull affections, and raiſe holy paſſions in us. But, if we ſincerely forſake our ſins, and evidence our love to *JESUS*, 'tis not greatly material what means or inſtruments we uſe.

§. 28. *Meditation on the paſſion.*

Ζῶν γὰρ ὑμῖν γράφω ἐρῶν τὸ ἀποθανεῖν, ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται.

My love is crucified, ſaid that loving and holy Martyr *Ignatius*, declaring how earneſtly he wiſh't to die for *JESUS*: and ſo, conſidering the paſſion of *JESUS*, I meditate with him; *My love is crucified*, my deareſt Saviour dies in moſt bitter pains; he hath been rudely bound and drag'd from place to place; he hath been ſtript, tied to a poſt, and whipt like a vile ſlave; he hath been buffetted and caned, and

and abus'd with all manner of contumelies; and now I ſee him crown'd with thorns, all over ſpittle and blood. I ſee him ſtretch'd upon the croſs, where his hands and his feet are nail'd; his head hangs down; I read in his pale face and his weeping eyes, the extremity of his pain, the anguiſh of his wounded ſoul. Lord art thou he whom my ſoul loveth? art thou my deareſt JESUS! were it my father, my brother, my friend, or my benefactor that ſhould ſuffer this undeſervedly, how would I pitty them! but ſhould they ſuffer this upon my account, Lord I could not outlive ſuch a ſight! if nothing elſe, love would certainly wound my ſoul to death. But behold it is ſo; this crucified, this dying man is my father, he gave me my being; he is my brother, he came down from heaven and took humane fleſh, that he might have that relation to me; he is my friend, he lays down his life to ſave mine; he is my greateſt benefactor, from him I receive all I have; all the bleſſings, the

O Domine Jeſu Chriſte, ſi intelligentia quam mihi dediſti uti vellem ſicut deberem, cernerem manifeſte, quo modo, imo quam ſine modo, à me creatura tua amari meruerit, qui prior dilexiſti me; tantus & tantum, & gratis, tamillum, & talem, & ingratum. Idiot.

the good things I injoy I owe to his kindneſs.

But heark, methinks I hear him ſpeak to me theſe pathetick, theſe moving words; Chriſtian, deareſt Chriſtian for whom here I die; conſider ſeriouſly, imprint it in thine heart, what in my words, what in my myſteries, thou readeſt of my ſuffering for thee; conſider who I am, what I indure, and to what end. I am the eternal Son of God whom the Angels adore: I became Man to make thee partaker of the Divine Nature; I am infinitely rich, the whole univerſe is mine: I became thus deſtitute of all things to purchaſe true riches for thee; I am of an Almighty Power, the whole world was made and ſubſiſts by me: I am now weak to make thee ſtrong I am overcome of mine enemies to make thee conquer thine; I am crown'd with glory, and cloth'd with Majeſty: I now wear theſe thorns, and am become naked, to clothe thee with robes of righteouſneſs, and Crown thee with a Royal Diadem; I am the inexhauſtible fountain of joy and happineſs: I now indure ſorrows and miſeries, to make thee joy-

joyful and happy; I am infinitely pure and innocent: I am become a ſacrifice for ſin, to merit thy pardon, and to ſanctifie and make thee holy; I am the Author of life, *the firſt and the laſt:* I now die to make thee live for ever: nothing but love moves me thus to ſuffer for thee, and nothing but love I require for it. Deareſt ſoul, thy ſins are more grievous to me than my wounds; add not ſorrow to my ſorrow by remaining impenitent; deny not this requeſt to thy dying bleeding Saviour that thou wouldſt mortifie thy luſts and forſake thy ſins; all that is paſt I heartily forgive, if thou becomeſt true penitent. I freely give my ſelf for thee, and beg that thou wouldſt give thy ſelf to me.

This us'd to be written under Crucifixes.

Aſpice ſerve Dei, ſic me poſuere Judæi.
Aſpice mortalis, pro te datur hoſtia talis.
Aſpice devote, quoniam ſic pendeo pro te.
Introitum vitæ reddo tibi, redde mihi te.
In cruce ſum pro te, qui peccas deſine pro me.
Deſine, do veniam, dic culpam, corrige vitam.

§. 29.

Proteſtations of love to JESUS.

What ſhall I ſay, now deareſt Lord? Words cannot anſwer thee. I am amaz'd, I am aſtoniſhed, I know not how to ſpeak, my tongue cannot

cannot expreſs what my heart feels. Lord I will ſay nothing! I will anſwer with ſighs and tears, with devout affections, by reſigning and giving up my body and ſoul to thee. I will anſwer by obedience, by actions, by now falling to work to reform my life, to mortifie my ſinful luſts, to cut off the members of the body of ſin. Sweeteſt *JESU*, I will love thee with all the affections my heart can entertain; no boſome ſin ſhall be ſo dear to me, but for thy ſake I will heartily part with it; no luſt ſhall be ſo pleaſing, but I will kill it, at thy requeſt and command; even my natural deſires and inclinations will I gladly deny, when they come in competition with that duty and love I owe, and ever will pay *JESUS*.

§. 30. *Of a ſincere amendment.*

But fickle and unhappy creatures, that we are, we often promiſe well, but ſeldome ſtand to our ingagements; our reſolutions are good and our performances very defective; *The ſpirit is willing, but the fleſh is weak*. I muſt not therefore reſt in generals, but I muſt reſolve more eſpecially againſt thoſe ſins I am inclined

clined to: and not only againſt them, but alſo upon the means whereby I may overcome and mortifie them; as avoiding the occaſions and intice-ments, inflicting on my ſelf ſuch ſe-verities, as may be proper reme-dies, and tying my ſelf to ſuch pious exerciſes, as I know will drive away the temptation. To forſake my ſins, is not to forbear drunkenneſs, when perhaps I am not inclined to it; or to avoid ſwearing, when I look upon it as an unpleaſing and unprofitable ſin; or to hate covetouſneſs, when by nature I am libetal: but, knowing what ſin pleaſeth me moſt, what vice my temper inclines me to, and what temptation is moſt ſtrong and im-portunate upon me, by my calling or my company, againſt that to for-tifie my ſelf, and imploy the utmoſt of my ſtrength; againſt that to watch and pray, and uſe ſincere and earneſt indeavours. To for-ſake my ſins, is not to ſay, I will for-ſake them. Some men, when they are call'd upon by fear, adverſity, or the ſecret voice of God within them, are forward enough to ingage with the Elder Brother in the Goſpel, *Lord, I will go and work in thy vine-yard:*

yard: but their hot zeal and haſty promiſe, ſoon decays into negligence, and at laſt into a cold denial. Though I reſolve againſt my natural corruptions never ſo ſeriouſly, that will not ſubdue them, without I uſe proper means for it; to *take up my croſs and follow Chriſt*, to *forſake all for him*, to *deny my ſelf*, to *take the kingdom of heaven by force*, to *cut off my right hand, and pluck out mine eye when they offend*, is more than barely to reſolve, and promiſe high, and proceed no further. *They that are Chriſts have*, not only verbally renounc'd, but actually *crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts*: therefore now, I have given up my ſelf to Chriſt, and deſire ever to be his, I muſt pray heartily, and watch diligently againſt my ſins, thoſe eſpecially that are moſt pleaſing and cuſtomary to me; I muſt, like S. *Paul*, *not fight in the air* againſt generals, *but keep under my body*, *be temperate in all things*, and ſtrive to the utmoſt for the *incorruptible crown*; I muſt uſe that violence to my ſelf, ſuch harſh applications, acts of penance and mortification, of my own or the Spiritual Phyſicians appoint-

Gal. 5. 24.

pointment, as are fit and requiſite to cure my diſtemper, to expel or reform that evil inclination which is inconſiſtent with my love to JESUS. To that end it will be very uſeful frequently to meditate on the paſſion of Chriſt, the day of our change, our appearance in judgement, the joys of heaven, the torments of hell, and the amazing conſideration of Eternity: and I am perſwaded, and will therefore ſpeak it plain, (though to the diſlike of moſt Diſſenters) that it might be very profitable, a great token of ſincerity, and an excellent inſtrument of reformation, to acquaint the Spiritual Judge and Phyſician, with the ſtate of our Conſcience and the diſtempers of our ſouls, to ſubmit to his impoſitions, to follow his counſels, and carefully obſerve his preſcriptions. This is recommended to us by Divine Authority, the general practice of the Chriſtian Church, while of late, and the greater Piety of our Anceſtors: and it would be a good remedy againſt our ignorance, the wrong judgment we make of our ſelves, our ſelf-love and partiality, our inward doubts and tormenting fears,

fears, and our reigning luſts and moſt common temptations. *Every man that ſtriveth for the maſtery is temperate in all things; now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible*: He that would vanquiſh his antagoniſt, was in the firſt place to vanquiſh himſelf, to indure hardſhip and ſeverity, and uſe all indeavours for the victory, for a fading garland: ſo he that will overcome his luſts, and maſter himſelf, and obtain that heavenly crown which never fadeth, muſt uſe great induſtry, many arts, all means that can conduce to that end.

§. 31. *Love will work the beſt Reformation.*

But the voluminous directions of Caſuiſts and Confeſſioniſts cannot reach all caſes and all particulars: to ſhorten our labour therefore, let the love of *JESUS* do the work of ſelf-reformation and it will be ſooneſt and beſt done. Love will find out the moſt effectual means for the extermination of our ſins, and love will uſe them to the beſt purpoſe. Certain it is, that love in all inſtances, ſets men upon acts of ſelf-denial; as great Generals and many more, who forego the peaceable in-

joyment

joyment of the comforts they might have at home, and expoſe themſelves to dangers, becauſe they love honour; merchants who forſake their deareſt relations, and run through many great troubles and perils, becauſe they love gain; and the more generous love of friendſhip, which hath caus'd many to chuſe great inconveniences and even death to ſerve their friends: and therefore certain it is alſo that the love of JESUS will make his yoke and even his croſs eaſie; will make us deny our ſelves and forbear what diſpleaſeth him, though otherwiſe pleaſing to us. That men might be without excuſe, God hath made a ſhort work upon the earth: "(ſaith S. *Aug.*) by con- "tracting his immenſity "into the narrow dimen- "ſions of man, he hath "abbreviated his doctrine "and our talk. JESUS is the Center and the ſum of our Faith and Religion, and the love of JESUS is the content of our duty. *I have determined,* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *not to know any thing among you ſave Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified,* and *we preach Chriſt*

Ut nemo habet excuſationem in die judicii voluit Deus, ſicut ſcriptum eſt, conſummare & abbreviare verbum ſuper terram. Aug. de Doct. Chriſtiana. l. 1. c. 1.

1 *Cor.* 2. 2. 1. 24.

Chriſt crucified, to the Jews a ſtumbling block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs: but to them that are called, Chriſt the power of God, and the wiſdom of God, that is, in whom God fully reveals his will, and gives us full power to fulfil it. Therefore (ſaith the Apoſtle) *God forbid that I ſhould glory ſave in the Croſs of Jeſus Chriſt my Lord; by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* The knowledge and love of JESUS, our Crucified Saviour, is the moſt proper means to teach us our duty, the greateſt motive to undertake it, and the beſt inſtrument to perform and effect it withal; it will kill our luſts, crucifie the members of the body of ſin, and carry us through the labours and difficulties of penitence and ſincere amendment: it will be the fulfilling of repentance, as it is *the fulfilling of the law.*

Gal.6.14.

For, as love is ſtrong to overcome ſtrong enemies, to kill the greateſt ſins: ſo it is wiſe and quickſighted to ſee and to find out the leaſt. A loving friend will not only not ſlander and defame his friend, not rob, or ſtrike, or murther him: but will forbear all words and actions which might

might bring him the leaſt grief or inconvenience; love will not only not give the greateſt provocations; but even not diſoblige or diſpleaſe in the leaſt inſtances. And ſo, if my love to JESUS be ſincere, it will not only keep me from confederation with his profeſt and greateſt enemies, but even make me ſhun and forſake the moſt ſecret and contemptible of them: I mean that the love of JESUS will never ſuffer me to entertain any the leaſt ſin; and, whenever I find that I have been unhappily ſeduc'd to commit any, it will cauſe me to grieve and ſadly to repent, that I have diſpleaſed my deareſt Saviour, and wounded that tender love I have for him. And indeed, it is reported of many devout perſons, great lovers of JESUS, that they would ſorrow and weep for ordinary failings, for ſmall omiſſions, more than others would, for much greater ſins. Divine Love, like a bright burning flame, will feel a commotion and diſturbance by the leaſt drop of water that falls upon it: a ſmall irregularity will be more grievous to a pious lover of JESUS, than great crimes to another. Therefore

fore he that could ſay, *the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us*, would alſo highly complain, and groan under the ſenſe of our unavoidable imperfections; *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Nothing will make us more ſenſible of our leaſt and moſt common ſins, than the love of JESUS; it will make us angry at, and impatient of them, and earneſt and ſevere in reforming of them.

Rom.7.24.

§. 32. *The exerciſe of repentance.*

So then as I profeſs my ſelf a lover, a ſincere and affectionate lover of JESUS, I am oblig'd to undo, as much as may be, what I have done amiſs, and to do it no more: this I heartily reſolve to do, and I hope ſhall really perform by the grace and aſſiſtance of my God. I will make amends and reſtitution to thoſe I have damnified in body, goods, or name, and even ask their pardon for the injury: and then bewail my ſins, grieve that I have offended my Divine and loving Maſter, and beg his forgiveneſs, and indeavour by tears and contrition to waſh away the ſtains and ſpots wherewith my ſoul is polluted, and diſpleaſeth the holy

holy eyes of the Holy JESUS; and ſo, to love JESUS binds upon me the whole exerciſe of repentance, which now muſt be work of my life; I am henceforth to live the life of a penitent, and I reſolve ſo to do; therefore, every night, I muſt call my ways to remembrance and beſides thoſe greater provocations, wherewith I offended my God in the days of my folly and inconſideration, I am to take notice of thoſe ſins of daily incurſion I am fallen into the laſt day, and weep over them all, and beg for pardon; & this eſpecially upon thoſe times appointed for mortification and acts of punitive repentance, *Fridays*, *Lent*, and others; wherein devout Chriſtians make it their more ſolemn indeavours to ſoften their hearts and make them melt into penitent tears: which muſt be done by Religious exerciſes and ſuch meditations as this.

My deareſt JESUS, I owe to thy kindeſt goodneſs, my being and all the bleſſings I injoy; and I know that thou didſt come down from heaven to die on the Croſs, that I might not die in hell to eternity; to ſuffer a bitter and ſhameful death, that I might

might live in eternal joys. I hope to ſee thy glorious face, one day; I hope to receive a crown from thy gracious hands; I hope to dwell in thy bliſsful ſociety for ever, deareſt Saviour, if thou wer't upon earth, I would go all the world over to proſtrate my ſelf before thee, to kiſs the ground thy Holy Feet ſhould tread, to ſerve thee, to ſhew my love and gratitude to thee. Deareſt Lord, I would now joyfully give up my life for thee; I would loſe the laſt drop of my blood to pleaſe and glorifie thee; I would die rather than deny thee. Why then, unhappy wretch that I am, do I offend thee, to whom I owe my ſelf, and all that I have? Why do I wound thee by my tranſgreſſions, who was wounded for them, by thy love? Why do I grieve thee, who purchaſeſt eternal joys for me? Why do I diſpleaſe thee, with whom I hope to live and dwell, and from whom I expect mercy and Salvation? Why do I ſin againſt thee, whom I love with all my ſoul? and why do not I live to thee, for whom I would die.

Such

Such conſiderations and ſoliloquies as theſe will produce not only *lachrymas doloris*, tears of grief, but alſo *lachrymas amoris*, tears of love and true contrition; and moreover, all the ſeverities of repentance which are ſo unacceptable and ſo repugnant to nature will be made pleaſant: thoſe things that would be ungrateful, as acts of juſtice and obedience, will become delightful as acts of love; *in amore nihil amari*, in love all things are ſweet that are done or ſuffer'd, for the ſake of the beloved. *I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake*, ſaith S. *Paul*, that great lover of JESUS; not that thoſe things are of their own nature pleaſant, whether inflicted by our ſelves or others; 'twas *for Chriſts ſake* that he like't them. He that by penitent ſorrow, and acts of ſelf-denial ſhews his love to JESUS, is certainly delighted with the moſt affiictive of thoſe voluntary ſufferings, as they are expreſſions of his love. Accordingly 'tis ſaid of the Religious of S. *Bernard*, that their watchings, and faſtings, and all the ſeverities of their rule

§. 33. *Is made eaſie by love.*

2 *Cor.* 12. 10.

were become ſo pleaſant to them, by the devoutneſs of their affections, that they were afraid of having their paradiſe in this world, and conſulted S. *Bernard* about it. And certainly nothing but love could carry the primitive *ſolitaries* and *Cœnobites* through that uneaſineſs and hardſhip they willingly undertook, and indur'd many years, and rejoyc'd in, and would not have exchang'd for all the pleaſures in the world.

§. 34. *And proceeds not from melancholy.*

Perhaps it will be ſaid, that ſuch things are the effect of melancholy or a forward and miſguided zeal, not of true piety. But let it be conſider'd, that natural love it ſelf hath done, and ſtill doth wonderful things. The love of friendſhip, the love of luſt, the love of riches and ambition have ſet men upon difficult attempts, have made them deſpiſe great dangers, have carried them through many labours and ſufferings, and perhaps as great as the moſt mortified Chriſtian ever undertook for JESUS and Eternity. This hath been and is ſtill the effect of Natural Love, and ſure Divine Love, whoſe object is ſo infinitely more

more excellent, may do at leaſt as much.

Beſides, things temporal ſeem great at a diſtance; but near at hand, they appear, as they are indeed, mean and contemptible: whereas contrariwiſe, things eternal, as they ſeem ſmall and deſpicable afar off, ſo near at hand they appear great and immenſe, they overwhelm the mind. Hence it is, that dying men who are on the brink of eternity, are amaz'd at the thoughts and near proſpect of it, and expreſs great regret for their paſt inconſideration, and promiſe great things for the future, if they might live longer: looking upon the world, as an empty nothing, not to be regarded where eternity appears; and hence it is alſo, that they who approach things eternal, and view them by meditation and contemplation, are of the ſame mind, have the ſame apprehenſions of them, and act accordingly: doing thoſe things which dying men repent they have not done; for indeed, it is no illuſion or deceit, but a great and real truth, that the world and all it's concerns are nothing, compar'd to eternity: and that we can never

be too careful to obtain eternal joys, and avoid eternal ſorrows. How much the Bleſſed Apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians were acted by this conſideration, S. *Paul* gives us to underſtand, ſaying, that whilſt they look't not on things viſible and tranſitory, but on things inviſible and eternal, then their afflictions were *light and but for a moment*; though, they laſted many years, and were ſo great, that the very thoughts of them can make us tremble, yet they were light & momentary, whilſt they look'd on eternity: and *they fainted not, though their outward man decay'd daily*, by their great mortifications, and their laborious zeal to ſerve God: and all this, *whilſt we look not on the things that are ſeen, but on the things which are not ſeen: for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal*; So that it is the effect of a wiſe and moſt rational conſideration, to value and love him above all things, who by dying for us; hath reſcu'd us from eternal ruine, and obtain'd eternal happineſs for us: and to make it appear by all means poſſible, doing or ſuffering any thing that may manifeſt

2 *Cor.* 4. 16, &c.

our

our love to JESUS, and aſſure us of a bleſſed eternity. It may juſtly be fear'd that the indevotion and lukewarmneſs of very many, not the worſt of Chriſtians, will not make them acceptable to God, who declares that he will *ſpue them out of his mouth that are neither hot nor cold:* and that their careleſsneſs and indifferency in religious duties, will hardly ſecure their eternal intereſt: However I think that it is a ſhame, to ſee *Benedictins*, *Franciſcans*, *Carthuſians*, and others, forſake the merriments, pleaſures and honors of the world, riſe up early and late go to reſt, wear nothing but Cilices and coarſe cloth, feed poorly and lie hard: and all this, and much more to obſerve the Rule of S. *Bruno*, S. *Francis*, or ſome other fanſieful or melancholy *Devoto*, who oblig'd them to ſome abſurd, ſome needleſs, and many uneaſie obſervations: from whom they never receiv'd any benefit, and from whom they can expect no kind of remuneration: and at the ſame time to ſee Chriſtians nice and dainty, unwilling to deprive themſelves of any pleaſure, or to undergo any thing of hardſhip, for to Rev. 3. 16.

obſerve the moſt reaſonable, holy, and advantageous Rule of Chriſt; from whom they have receiv'd the greateſt favours, from whom they expect the greateſt rewards, and to whoſe ſervice and obedience they have devoted themſelves, by a ſolemn vow, in holy Baptiſm.

§. 35. *Corporal Auſterities may pleaſe God.*

Now if it be doubted whether voluntary Corporal Auſterities be acceptable to God, I anſwer, that the example of our Bleſſed Saviour, which we are to imitate and follow, makes it unqueſtionable; beſides thoſe Scriptures which command us to *deny our ſelves*, to *take up our Croſs*, to *cut off even hands and feet*, when they make us offend, and that declaration of our Bleſſed Saviour, *when ye faſt, be not as the hypocrites*, (faſting comprehends all external mortifications, which Chriſt appoints not when, and how to be us'd: but leaves to our free choiſe and the determination of the Church, only declaring how much God is pleas'd with them) *but anoint thy head and waſh thy face, that thou appear not unto men to faſt, but to thy father which is in ſecret, and thy father which ſees in ſecret, ſhall reward*

Mat. 6. 18.

ward thee openly; the ſame that is promis'd to Prayers, and alms. Theſe, I ſay, make it as clear as the light, that God recommends, accepts, and rewards ſpontaneous acts of Mortification, when perform'd without hypocriſie or oſtentation. They are inſtruments of Religion, whereby our luſts are ſubdu'd, the body kept under, and the ſpirit it ſelf mortified; they are marks of the ſincerity of our ſorrow, of our regret to have offended God, and our anger againſt our ſelves for it; and they are teſtimonials of our love, when we thus take Gods cauſe in hand, puniſhing the offender for paſt offences, and ſeeking to prevent others that might follow. For this I dare appeal to the true lovers of JESUS, who needed not this digreſſion, to convince them that acts of ſelf-denial are pleaſing to God, and pleaſing to themſelves.

Homo pœnitens eſt homo ſibi iratus.

I muſt therefore, the better to declare my love to JESUS, upon appointed days eſpecially, or alſo at other times, as occaſion may be offered, either inflict on my ſelf voluntary afflictions, or deprive my ſelf of lawful pleaſures; as that pious

2 *Sam.* 23. 16. Prince who pour'd out to God that water, which he thirſted exceedingly: ſometimes in the matter of meat and drink, *put a knife to my throat*, when I might indulge to it; remembring how in that matter I have offended, and inwardly ſpeaking my grief for it, and my deſire of the food of Angels, the dainties of the *great Supper of the Lamb*: ſometimes forbear a merry meeting, and devote to charity what I ſhould ſpend on my recreation; and ſo, in many innumerable other caſes, as opportunity, and the ſecret whiſpers of love ſhall ſuggeſt; and all this, without ſcruple, without affectation, without pride: for, where we are not bound, ſuch things may be omitted, ſo the great duty of contrition and love be ſecure.

§. 36. *Not to return again to our ſins when temptations return.*

But the beſt half of repentance is yet behind; that which is moſt to be attended to, that which I muſt chiefly deſign in all acts of mortification is, that I return no more to thoſe ſins for the which I grieve and affict my ſelf. The occaſions and inticements of ſin will doubtleſs come again; my thoughts will not always be fix'd upon

on Divine Objects, my mind will return to the world; my passions will be disorderly and my appetite unruly again: how shall I stand, and resist, and be safe, in the time of danger, in the hour of tryal and temptation? I resolve to lift up my soul to JESUS and beg his assistance; I will remember my vows and ingagements, how much I am bound to love and obey JESUS rather than my lusts, and how much a gainer I shall be by it.

Thus, when a provocation to anger is given, and I find my heart rise, and my spirits take fire and grow turbulent, instead of giving way to passion, or suffering that it should proceed to hatred and revenge, I will turn aside and check my self with the remembrance of my meekest Saviour, *who was led as a lamb to the slaughter and opened not his mouth, who, when he was revil'd, reviled not again, when he suffered the greatest injuries, yet used no threatning, leaving us an exemple that we should follow his steps.* I will remember how ill it becomes me to be angry with others, who have so much reason to be angry with my self for having

1 Pet. 2. 21.

ving so highly and frequently, provok'd my God to anger; I will consider how ill it becomes me to be revengeful and severe to others, when all my hopes, and all my happiness depend upon forbearance and mercy; I will think of, and fear that just exprobration of my Lord against the revengeful, *thou wicked servant, shouldst thou not have had compassion on thy fellow servant, as I had pity on thee*; and I will remember that it is JESUS who died for me, JESUS for whom I would die, who intercedes for mine enemies, and will rejoyce that I have some of that kind of love to repay to him, which he shewed me when I was his enemy; *sicut ego vos*, as *I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* If lust inticeth me to acts of impurity, I will call to mind the corruption and dissolution of this vile body of sin; I will think on my last account, the day of judgment, and the dreadful flames of hell; and I will remember him, who for me was crucified and with whom my love hath crucified me; and that now is the time to make it appear that I love him, to justifie the sincerity of my

Joh. 13. 34.

my proteſtations; and ſo, for covetouſneſs, pride, intemperance, and all ſuch temptations, I will reject their attempts and profers, with indignation, as a true friend would ſcorn the ſolicitations to betray his friend. What, ſhall I be falſe to him I love, to him that loveth me, who hath ſhed his bloud for me, and to whom I have often proteſted that I would die for him? ſhall I break the ſacred bonds of love, and my moſt ſacred vows, and put my ſoul into a ſtate of regret, unquietneſs, ſhame and ſorrow for this vile tranſitory profit or pleaſure? O my deareſt JESUS, thou knoweſt that I love thee; I beſeech thee, make that love victorious againſt thine enemies and mine. I would die rather than deny thee, for any intereſt in the world: and I hope thou wilt not deny me at the laſt day, but own me among thy faithful friends. Lord, I ſerve thee not for nothing; great are the reaſons why I ſhould obey thee: thou haſt done much for me, and from thee I ſtill expect much, infinite rewards for ſuch due and poor ſervices; Lord, let me die before I deliberately ſin againſt thee.

Thus,

§. 37. *To do what we do cheerfully.* Thus, by love I reſolve to conquer my ſelf, to deny and mortifie my luſts; by love, I will ſtrive to overcome all unlawful deſires, all ſinful motions: and then I ſhall rejoyce in the victory. It ſhall not make me peeviſh and moroſe, churliſh and ſevere to others, but rather cheerful and contented, gentle and affable: ſo that it ſhall be ſeen by my outward deportment, how much pleaſure and tranquillity my ſoul hath inwardly: that I rejoyce in what I do for Chriſt; that it is delicious to me to deny my ſelf for his ſake, to oblige ſo great, ſo true, ſo generous a friend as *JESUS*, who hath done all acts of friendſhip for me, and owns me for his friend. *I* *Joh.* 13.14 *call you not ſervants but friends, ye are my friends indeed, if ye do whatſoever I have commanded you.* Thoſe that are accounted gallant men in the world will venture their lives to ſecond a friend in an idle and unchriſtian quarel: and their wounds they bear with courage and count them honourable, *'Twas to ſerve a friend*; How much more ſhould I rejoyce in that violence I offer to my appetites and unruly deſires, for to pleaſe

pleaſe and ſerve my heavenly, my beſt, my deareſt friend, whom I can never love ſo much as he deſerves: and in loving of whom, I am infinitely happier than if I ſhould injoy all the pleaſures of ſin, as long as I live; I only grieve and am diſpleas'd that I can do ſo little for him, that I can requite his love no better. I know that many perſons have done far more for their leſs-deſerving friends, than I do for JESUS.

§. 38.

A ſingular example of humane love.

"It is reported by "*Greek* hiſtorians of two "loving ſiſters, *Eudoxia* "and *Irenea* daughters to "the laſt unhappy Prince "of *Morea*, who with his "life loſt his crown and "countrey; that an uncle ſaved them "from the general deſolation and "captivity which ſoon ſucceeded the "loſt battel, and carried them to "old *Andronicus* their kinſman, "then Emperor of *Conſtantinople*. "There, with pity, they found a "kind welcome and as great re"ſpects as they could wiſh. Their "beauty, their vertues and accom"pliſhments ſurpaſt their princely "birth,

Niceph. Gregor. Chalcondyſ.

"birth, and were as eminent as their "fortune was low: ſo that young *Andronicus* who was to ſucceed in "the Empire was, in proceſs of time "taken with *Eudoxia*, lov'd her paſ-"ſionately, and obtain'd the Em-"perors conſent to marry her. This "caus'd great troubles to *Irenea*, who "lik'd it well as ſhe lov'd her "ſiſter, but could not but grieve at "it, as ſhe lov'd the Prince (for "unhappily ſhe had ſettl'd her af-"fections on him.) Upon this ſhe "fell ſick, and almoſt to death: and, "it being obſerv'd that ſome di-"ſtemper in her mind caus'd the di-"ſtemper of her body, her ſiſter, "proteſting of her love to her, aſſu-"ring her that *Eudoxia* ſhould have "only the title and the trouble, but "*Irenea* the priviledges and the power "of an Empreſs, conjur'd her to de-"clare what caus'd her diſcontent. "Having underſtood what it was, "and grieving that ſhe ſhould be "the occaſion of her ſiſters danger "and ſorrow, ſhe preſently took "from her head a jewel the Prince "had given her, in form like a "half-moon; and with it ſhe ſo "wounded and diſfigur'd her face,

"that

"that ſhe cur'd the Prince of his "love, as ſhe deſigned: and after- "wards retir'd to *Galliopoli*, where "ſhe entred a Cloiſter, and devoted "the reſt of her life to God. The "Prince finding in *Irenea* what he "had loſt in *Eudoxia*, ſoon after en- "tertain'd the ſame paſſion for her, "he had for her ſiſter: but *Irenea*, "remembring her ſiſters generoſity, "forgot her affection to the Prince; "conſidering what *Eudoxia* had vo- "luntarily ſuffer'd for her, how "great, how tender a love ſhe had "expreſt in what ſhe had done, re- "ſolves to forſake *Andronicus*, to "forego her eaſe and pleaſure, and "what ſhe had ſo earneſtly deſir'd, "rather than be ungrateful. Where- "upon ſhe ſteals away from the "court, goes to *Galliopoli*, enters her "ſiſters Cloiſter, and, having ex- "preſt to her her love and acknow- "ledgments, ſhe takes the ſame "vows, and reſolves to live and die "to God, and with her beloved "ſiſter. This ſtory makes me grieve and bluſh, that ſo little gratitude ſhould be paid to JESUS for greater benefits, for that incompa- rable love he hath ſhewed men in dy- ing

ing for them; that I my ſelf ſhould ſo ill requite his much greater kindneſs, ſo poorly and imperfectly return his moſt wonderful love. What, ſhall I think it much to refrain my intemperance for his ſake, who, for mine, faſted long and often, and taſted vinegar and gall? ſhall I think it much to mortifie my pride and anger for him, who, for my ſake deſpiſed the ſhame of the croſs, and return'd nothing but meekneſs to the greateſt provocations? ſhall I think it much to refrain my worldly, covetous deſires for him, who, for me, became poor, naked, deſtitute of all things, though he were Lord of all? ſhall I think it much, to deny my ſelf ſome momentary ſenſual pleaſures, for him who carried my ſorrows, who ſhed his blood and was crucified to ſave me? No, my deareſt *JESUS*, thy love hath overcome me, I will be no more what I have been, henceforth it ſhall be my wealth, my delight, my glory and ambition to ſerve and obey thee, to be loving, to be faithful to thee.

This change and Reformation is what our Religion requires; The Scripture ſuppoſeth it in all that have imbrac'd Chriſtianity, and is earneſt and preſſing in its exhortations to it. *we beſeech you Brethren, and exhort you by the Lord* JESUS, *that as ye have received of us, how ye ought to walk and to pleaſe God, ſo ye would abound more and more: for ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord* JESUS, *for this is the will of God, even your ſanctification:* Again, *but ye have not ſo learned Chriſt* (as to follow the greedineſs and luſts of the Gentiles) *If ſo be that ye have heard of him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in* JESUS, *that ye put off, concerning the former converſation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts; and be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*: And in another place, this change, being ſo abſolutely neceſſary, is abſolutely ſuppos'd to be wrought in us. *If ye are riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above* ——— *for you are dead, and your*

§. 39. *The deſign of Religion is to make us better.* 1 Theſ. 4. 1. 2. Eph. 4. 20. 21, &c.

your life is hid with Chriſt in God. —
Coloſs. 3. 1. *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanneſs,*
2, &c. *inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs which is idolatry* —— *in the which ye walked ſometime when ye lived in them, but now, you alſo put off theſe, anger, wrath, malice, blaſphemy, evil communication out of your mouth; lie not one to another, ſeeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.* Here is nothing to countenance thoſe frightful fanatical pangs of the New-birth, which proceed from Enthuſiaſm or melancholy; nothing to countenance the fanſieful applications of a borrowed or rather ſnatcht-away righteouſneſs: but a real change, in our affections and our manners, is ſuppos'd and recommended; And in-
Tit. 2. 11. deed, that *grace of God which bringeth ſalvation*, teacheth none of theſe odd and new-deviſed doctrines, but
12. that *denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live in this preſent world ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly*; which is the ſum of our duty: that we

we ſhould be temperate in our bodies and minds, juſt and charitable in our intercourſe with other men, and pious in our minds, devout in acts of Religion and worſhip to God. The learning and practiſing this leſſon is that and that alone, whereby the offered ſalvation is obtained and laid hold on.

So now, I muſt remember that I am not mine own, I am his that made and redeemed me; I am his to whom I have given my ſelf, when I undertook *manfully to fight under his banner againſt ſin, the world and the Devil:* to me is addreſt that exhortation, *Thou, O man of God, flee theſe things* (ſtrifes, diſputes and covetouſneſs, before mentioned) *and follow after righteouſneſs, godlineſs, faith, love, patience, meekneſs, fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.* I am become a Souldier of JESUS; to me S. *Paul* ſpeaks, as well as to *Timothy, Thou therefore indure hardneſs as a good Souldier of* JESUS *Chriſt, no man that warreth intangles himſelf with the affairs of this life, that he may pleaſe him who hath choſen him to be a Souldier.* If I were in the Militia of any

§. 40. *A proteſtation of being faithful unto death.*

1 *Tim.* 6. 11. 12.

2 *Tim.* 2. 3. 4.

any other Prince, I might indure hardneſs enough, before I could obtain his favour, or indeed be taken notice of; heat and cold, hunger, thirſt and wearineſs, ſleepleſs nights and perpetual dangers; all this, and much more I might indure many years, and not be look'd upon; here my General prevented me with his kindneſs; he firſt fought againſt mine enemies; he firſt loved me, and indured hardſhip for me; and he notes every thing I ſuffer for him, ſets it down and aſſigns a reward to it. Under another commander I might do brave actions, behave my ſelf valiantly, and yet not be ſeen: here my General hath always his eyes upon me, he incourageth me; and rejoyceth to ſee my fortitude; he is always ready to help me, and is moſt delighted, when he ſees me zealous and diligent. I might fight long enough for an earthly King, I could only get a poor ſubſiſtence or an empty fame, but never ſo much as one province of his dominions: here, fighting for my heavenly King, I ſhall get unvaluable treaſures, immortal glory, and a kingdom which ſhall have no end, *To him that overcometh will*

Rev. 3. 21.

will I grant to ſit with me in my throne. I will therefore, never again, fight againſt the captain of my ſalvation, and I will never forſake him; I will often renew my vows, often ſwear allegiance to him, upon that ſacred blood which he ſhed for me, and which he gives me to comfort and ſtrengthen my heart; I will daily think on thoſe things that may increaſe my zeal and diligence, and help me to reſiſt temptations; and I will ſuffer any thing, uſe all means poſſible to perform theſe reſolutions, and approve my ſelf, unto death, a lover of *JESUS, if any man loves not the Lord JESUS, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* 1 Cor. 16. 22.

FINIS.

6 JY 53

Claustrum Animæ:

THE

Reformed Monastery;

OR,

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

The Second Part.

LONDON,
Printed for *Henry Brome*, at the Gun in S. *Paul's* Church-yard the West-End.
MDCLXXVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

I Have now gone through half of my task, the negative part of our Baptiſmal vow, and of our duty; and would to God, Reader, I had inkindled of the Divine fire of love in thy heart and mine, but enough to ſecure us from works of darkneſs, enough to quench and to conſume our luſts: I would not doubt but it would ſoon burn light, inflame our hearts with a pious zeal, and make us ſo fruitful in good works, that men, ſeeing them, would glorifie our father which is in heaven. I may,

with a juſt cauſe complain of my ſelf; concerning this Tractate of mine, as one did of Eraſmus *about his* Enchiridion, *that* there is more piety in the book than in the Author; *and withal I may complain of the book alſo, that it is many ways defective, that is, it ſuppoſeth many things previous to the uſe of it, Chriſtian inſtruction, a pious mind, pious books, pious meditations, all helps and inſtruments of Religion and Holy Living: and even in what it handles it falls far ſhort, of what the ſubject would bear. The caution therefore I would give is this, that no perſon would think that no other appetites are to be reſtrain'd, no other ſins forſaken than thoſe I mention: or that no other means to maſter our luſts and ſecure our duty, are to be us'd, than thoſe I ſpecified: or that no other acts and expreſſions of*

Eraſ. Epiſt. ad Voluſ.

of love are to be given, than thoſe I have preſcrib'd. No, my deſign is not to run over particulars, and indeed 'tis next to impoſſible, for love hath a general intendance over all actions. That little I have ſaid concerning Self-Reformations, abſtaining from that which is evil, will be ſufficient where love is, and where it is not, more would do no good: and that little I ſhall ſay concerning the poſitive part of our duty, doing that which is good, will ſuffice alſo that Chriſtian who knows what it is to love God. The truth is, my deſign is only to direct or beget love, to ſhew its great power, and the great advantages it brings. Could I but teach thee, often to repeat from thy heart (as ſome Ancient Chriſtians, at the Celebration of the Lords Supper) I love thee dear Jeſus, I love thee dear

Jeſus, *I ſhould think to have profited thee more, than if I had unfolded myſteries, and diſplayd much learning in the faireſt, and moſt exact method; For, I am ſure, that love would ſoon teach thee to know and to do that which pleaſeth God, to know and to perform the whole of thy duty*: He hath taught the beſt part of religion, and to the beſt purpoſe, who hath taught others to love it. *'Tis certain that, if we give our love to God, we ſhall afterwards refuſe him nothing; where a man gives his heart, he will not refuſe his hands or his knees; where he gives his ſoul, he will not deny his bread, or his goods: God ſhall have all that he requires, and all we can offer to him, if he hath our love and affections No qualification but love will*

Præcipuam Chriſtiana pietatis portionem docuit, quiſquis ad hujus inflammavit amorem.

will make us true Chriſtians; no other vertue but may conſiſt with ſome ſin, love alone is contrary to all, no other grace can reſiſt all temptations, love alone hath that unlimited power; no other grace will enable us to diſcharge all our obligations, love *alone* is the fulfilling of the law; *all gifts and vertues, without love, can not fit a man for heaven, nor make him dear to God: but love can do it of it ſelf*; they that be faithful in love, ſhall abide with him. *As there are Dragons that are bright and glittering, and have precious ſtones in their heads; as there are Comets that have the light and the elevation of ſtars: ſo there are vicious perſons, falſe Chriſtians that are indow'd with excellent parts, and are eminent in*

Alia virtus cum peccato ſed dilectio tua omni peccato contrariatur, omni temptationi reſiſtit. *Idiot.*

Wiſd. 3. 9.

ſome vertues; but it profiteth nothing without love; If I ſpeak the tongues of Men and Angels; *(ſaith* S.*Paul)* If I have the gift of propheſie and underſtand all myſteries; if I have all faith, ſo that I remove mountains; if I give my goods to the poor and even my body to be burn'd, and have not charity, I am nothing, and it profits me nothing. *Of all other gifts and abilities it may be ſaid, as of* knowledge, *that they all* puff up, but charity *alone* edifieth; *among thoſe creatures which ſtand and worſhip before God, there is not only a Man and an Eagle, which may repreſent perſons of great learning, fitted for high ſpeculations, but alſo a Lion and an Ox, whereby Chriſtians of meaner parts and knowledge are ſignified: for theſe are capable of love as much as the others, and 'tis love*

1 Cor. 13. 1, &c.

1 Cor. 8. 1.

love alone qualifies men to dwell with that God, who is love it ſelf, as S. John *calls him;* God is love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. *God loves men, that they may love him a-*
"*gain: (ſaith S.* Aug.*)*
"*& he only requires that*
"*we would love him,*
"*knowing that that love*
"*is, of it ſelf, ſufficient to make us*
"*eternally happy I have therefore all along fitted my diſcourſe and meditations to every mans capacity and opportunities, as much as I could: becauſe all may love, and all muſt love that will be happy. And though I may have recommended ſome things as means and inſtruments: yet I have preſcribed nothing as a duty, but the great obligations which were laid upon us, when we were baptized into Chriſt. My* Monaſtery, *as to the place, is the Church, as to*

1 Joh. 4. 16

Amat Deus ut ametur, nil aliud vult quam amari, &c.

the rule is the love of Jeſus: and the Orders of it are ſuch as ſhould be obſerved by all Chriſtians. I might indeed have mention'd many uſeful directions, given by Ancient Fathers and Spiritual Guides, to ſuch as made profeſſion of greater piety and ſtricter lives than others: but they could not have ſuted with all conditions and callings: therefore I have appointed no other rule to thoſe that ſhall enter this Cloiſter, *but the love of Jeſus, in a ſincere obedience to his holy precepts, or a voluntary compliance with his Divine Counſels.*

Not that I would deny that places for Religious Retirement might afford many great advantages, in order to greater devotion and heavenly mindedneſs: for I bewail their loſs, and heartily wiſh that the piety and charity of the preſent age might reſtore to this

this nation the uſeful conveniency of them. Neceſſary Reformations might have repurg'd Monaſteries as well as the Church, without aboliſhing of them: and they might have been ſtill houſes of Religion *without having any dependance upon* Rome. *All men are not inclining to, nor fitted for an active life; ſome would be glad to find a place of reſt and retirement for contemplation: ſome who, by melancholy or by* the terrors of the Lord, *are frighted from their ſins and from the civiliz'd world into Quakeriſm, into an unhappy ſullenneſs and Apoſtaſie, would perhaps exchange their ſilks and laces for the coarſer garments of mortified profeſſors of a Monaſtick life: and find, among them, that happineſs and*

Multi ſunt qui poſſunt Religioſam vitam etiam cum ſæculari habitu ducere, & plerique ſunt qui niſi omnia reliquerint, ſalvari apud Deum nullatenus poſſunt. *Greg. M. Ep. ad Maur. imp.*

peace of the ſoul, which they vainly ſeek for, in their wretched and deluded Brotherhood; ſome who, upon great afflictions and ſudden changes of fortune, fall into a ſtate of ſorrow and tedious ſadneſs, and are left in the world to ſtruggle with the temptations of a diſcontented mind, would perhaps take Sanctuary in a Religious houſe; *and give themſelves up wholly to Jeſus, and forget their temporal ſorrow, by heavenly joys and meditations: and at laſt bleſs that ſtorm and ſhipwrack which caſt them into that unknown land of reſt and ſafety; ſome, that are forward and ready to promiſe well and take good reſolutions, have not ſtrength enough to keep them, but are prevail'd upon, by the importunity of thoſe temptations they meet withal in the converſe of men, who, being fled from thoſe occaſions of ſin, might,*

might, by the good example & good instructions of a Religious Society, ſecure themſelves, and ſtand to their holy ingagements; ſome who never lov'd the world, or that are grown weary of it, or have paſſionate longings for heaven, would willingly free themſelves of the cumbrances and diſtractions of worldly buſineſs, to injoy the leiſure and opportunities of meditation, devotion, and other ſpiritual exerciſes; and ſome that are much taken with the ſtrict lives and great piety of Papiſt-Friers, would look home and ſpend their commendations on the purer Religion, and better-order'd lives and devotions of thoſe, in this Church, that ſhould wholly devote themſelves to God. However 'tis not to be denied, but that men are much affected and influenc'd by the place, the company, the way of living, and the outward circum-

ſtances

ſtances wherein they are ingag'd: and, I believe, it might be now as true a proverb as ever, Bene vixit qui bene latuit, *he lives beſt and moſt ſafe, who is leaſt acquainted with the world and lives fartheſt from it.*

But though we want ſome conveniences for withdrawing from temporal affairs, to mind eternity and our ſouls the better: yet we muſt go to heaven; wherever we live, we muſt live to God, that we may live with God; therefore, if we cannot have a material, we muſt have a Spiritual cloiſter, which may defend us againſt temptations, and guide and aſſiſt us in doing our duty. Such a one is the love of Jeſus; *it will protect us againſt all dangers and ſpiritual enemies, better than the ſtrongeſt walls of any Abbey: and it will make us devout and zealous*

Clauſtrum ubique portate interius. *Nerb. Ab. præmonſt.*

zealous in God's ſervice, beyond what the exhortations of the wiſeſt Abbot could do. "Dum cre- Greg. Mag.
"ſcit fortitudo amoris interni,
"Infirmatur fortitudo carnis,
"*whilſt love is ſtrong the fleſh is*
"*mortified, and its luſts are ſub-*
"*du'd.* Amanti nihil eſt dif- Auguſt.
"ficile, nihil impoſſibile, *love*
"*can do all things of its ſelf, it*
"*paſſeth over all difficulties, and*
"*there is no obſtacle which it over-*
"*comes not. Love can ſupply the want of all outward helps and advantages; let it but be our care, to ſecure love and it will ſecure us. Let us therefore feed and entertain it by reading and meditation, by frequent prayers and acts of love, and by obſerving and taſting how gracious the Lord is in all his works*; all things in heaven and earth do inceſſantly cry to us, that

Cœlum & terra & omnia quæ in eis ſunt non ceſſant mihi dicere ut amem Dominum Deum meum. *Aug.*

that we ſhould love God. *God*
Hoſ. 4. 11. draws *us after him*, with cords of a man, with bands of love, *therefore*, *by love*, *we can beſt follow him*. *But*, let us not love in word or in tongue, but indeed and in truth: and hereby we ſhall know that we are of the truth, and we ſhall aſſure our hearts before him.
1 *Joh.* 3. 18

Clauſtrum

Clauſtrum Animæ:

THE

Reformed Monaſtery;

OR,

The Love of

JESUS.

§. 1. *Of the poſitive part of our Baptiſmal vow.*

MY former diſobedience and rebellions againſt my Bleſſed Lord and deareſt Maſter, I have examin'd and bewailed; I have conſider'd that by ſin I wound and crucifie him afreſh, and therefore have reſolv'd to ſin no more, never to lift up hand or heart againſt him. But will love be ſatisfied with this? is it a ſufficient demonſtration of love, not to abuſe, not

not to injure a friend? No ſure, I muſt proceed further; love requires more than this. I muſt not only abſtain from what would anger him I love: but I ſhould do that that will pleaſe him. 'Tis part of my duty, as it was of my vow, not only *to renounce the Devil and all his works*: but alſo *to believe all the articles of the Chriſtian faith, and to keep Gods holy will and Commandments, and walk in the ſame all the days of my life*. As for the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, I believe them from my heart, and reſolve to own and confeſs them whilſt I live; I never will diſpute or object againſt them, and I hope, I ſhould chuſe to die, before I would renounce any of them; as for other leſs neceſſary doctrines, I will be guided by my Spiritual Governors; in controverſies, I will ſubmit to the judgment of that Holy Church, in whoſe Communion I live; and ſo I will read and ponder Gods Holy Word, eſpecially the New Teſtament, that I may know my maſters will, and be incourag'd to do it: not that I may find out new myſteries and maintain the private opinions of a party. It remains then only, that I

ſhould

ſhould *keep Gods holy will and Commandments, and walk in the ſame all the days of my life.* And this I alſo undertake; it ſhall be my daily and conſtant ſtudy and indeavour; I reſolve to obey to the utmoſt of my power: and I alſo promiſe further to manifeſt my love by free-will-offerings, as God ſhall enable me.

§. 2. *A proteſtation of obedience.*

But firſt my love is to appear by doing what is commanded; *This is the love of God that we keep his commandments* (ſaith S. *John*:) and *he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me,* (ſaith our Bleſſed Saviour.) There can be no love without obedience, this is its firſt and chiefeſt Tryal; *if a man love me, he will keep my words.* Now then, ſhould my beloved Lord ask me, as once he did Saint *Peter*, N. *doſt thou love me?* would not my heart anſwer, with his zealous Apoſtle, *Yes Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee;* ——— *I would lay down my life for thee:* why, to this he replies again, *if thou loveſt me, keep my Commandments.* Every time a Chriſtian tells Jeſus, *Lord I love thee,* Jeſus anſwers again,

1 *Joh.* 5. 3.
Joh. 14. 21.
23.
Joh. 21. 15.
13. 37.
14. 15.

again, *if thou loveſt me, keep my Commandments:* So that, without I obſerve this, I can no ways pretend to love him. Therefore I am to take notice of, and to amend ſins of omiſſion, which too too many among Chriſtians mind little, or not at all. In the matter of ſobriety I am commanded, whether I eat or drink, to do it, as all things elſe, to the glory of God; and to be contented, whatſoever ſtate I am in; for chaſtity I am commanded to know how to keep my veſſel in ſanctification and honor; for acts of corporal and ſpiritual mercy, I am commanded to be merciful, as my heavenly father is merciful, and to forgive injuries, as I deſire my ſelf to be forgiven; for reverence to my betters, I am commanded to honour and obey my ſuperiors Eccleſiaſtical and Civil; in what concerns Divine Worſhip, I am bound to read and pray, and mediditate, to inſtruct my ſelf and family, to receive the Bleſſed Sacrament, to have a veneration and reſpect for all things that belong or relate to God, and him to love and fear, and truſt and adore evermore: All theſe, and all other duties, with the ſpecial pre-

precepts of the New Teſtament, is the task I chearfully undertake, and in the performance whereof I will approve my ſelf a ſincere lover of JESUS.

His yoke is eaſie and his burthen light, his Commandments are not grievous, and yet *in keeping of them there is great reward*: a temporal happineſs, than which none is greater in this world, and an eternal happineſs, infinitely greater than any this world can afford: do not I ſee what pains moſt men are at to get a ſubſiſtence for this world? how they run and ſweat and ſpend themſelves to provide for this periſhing life; which yet is miſerable, ſhort, and uncertain? and ſhall *I not labour for the meat which abideth to eternal life?* ſhall I be at no pains to ſecure that life which hath no end, and knows no miſery? O that I could duly underſtand the difference betwixt this life and the life to come! how would I ſlight the one, and deſire the other! or rather how cheerfully would I imploy this preſent, to obtain that which is to come! Is not there ſervants that work hard day by day, a whole year to-

§. 3. *How great a happineſs follows our obedience.*

together for ſmall wages; who are almoſt perpetually imploy'd about their maſters buſineſs: and yet have ſometimes no thanks, and often, but a ſorry reward? and am not I one of thoſe labourers whom my Lord hath
Mat.20. hired to work in his vineyard? am not I one of thoſe ſervants, whom he hath intruſted with his goods, to whom he hath intruſted talents to improve for him, and do not I deſire he ſhould tell me one day, *well*
Mat.21. *done, good and faithful ſervant?* is not my ſalary great, greater than any Prince on earth could make it, greater than I could wiſh, greater than I can comprehend? eternal reſt, eternal joys, eternal happineſs, eternal glories; eternity it ſelf, he himſelf will be my reward. Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! Bleſſed Eternity. Eternity never enough to be conſider'd, Eternity never enough to be valu'd, ſhall I obtain thee by what I do here for my Lord? ſhall I obtain thee by that imperfect ſervice I pay to my gracious Maſter? *O God who*
Sixth Sunday after Trinity. *haſt prepared for them that love thee, ſuch good things as paſs manse underſtanding, pour into our hearts ſuch love*

love towards thee, that we loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promiſes which exceed all that we can deſire, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, Amen. Lord I am not worthy to be called thy Son; I have often beg'd to be one of thy hired ſervants, the meaneſt ſo I love and obey beſt. O let me, like thy ſervant *Moſes*, ever *have a reſpect to the recompence of the reward*, ever conſider what I ſhall get by ſerving thee, that I may be diligent, perſevering and cheerful in doing my duty. O my ſoul, bluſh to conſider how laborious men are for the unſatisfying acqueſts of this earth; how eager thou haſt been thy ſelf in purſuing of them; and how ſlothful, how unactive and heavy thou art in working for eternal reſt, for the treaſures of eternity, for the glories of heaven, for thoſe Divine Pleaſures which are at the right hand of God for evermore. Whence comes this, unhappy ſoul, is it not from inconſideration? becauſe thou doſt not lift up thine eyes to ſee whither the way of love and obedience will bring thee; becauſe thou doſt not look beyond the world, upon things eternal; becauſe thou doſt not often

enough

enough meditate upon heaven and eternity; that unvaluable, infinite recompence which awaits thee, as ſoon as thy work is finiſh'd. Reſolve therefore to amend this, and daily, once at leaſt, to conſider what are thy wages, what thou ſhalt get by ſerving God. As the Apoſtle ſays of afflictions, that they *are light and but for a moment, whilſt we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen:* the ſame we may ſay of the moſt difficult of Chriſtian duties, that *they are light and but for a moment*, that they are eaſie and ſoon done; that there is no tediouſneſs, no hardſhip in them, whilſt we look upon things eternal, whilſt we *have a reſpect unto the recompenſe of the reward.*

§. 4. *We ſhould often look on our reward.*

This conſideration doubtleſs, would be powerful and effectual, would wake and ſtir us up, and make us active and lively, if we had it often in our minds. Therefore our Bleſſed Saviour, to incourage his followers and make them diligent in his ſervice, doth often give them to underſtand, what by parables and what by plain declarations, that they ſhould not

not ſerve him for nought, and that they ſhould be no loſers by him; that he would conſider them for their time, for their expences, for their ſufferings and for their labours; that he would take notice of the leaſt thing they ſhould do for him; ſo that even a *cup of water* given for his ſake ſhould not go unrewarded; and that their reward ſhould be great, bountiful and moſt excellent, far above their deſerts and even above their wiſhes and apprehenſions: an angelick nature, a glory bright as the Sun it ſelf, an eternal life, a heavenly, an endleſs kingdom, his own joys ſhould be their portion and their recompence. And we find alſo the Holy Apoſtles, aſſuring thoſe whom they brought to work in their Lords vineyard, that they ſhould certainly have their hire, and be paid moſt generouſly for their work, *God will render to every man according to his deeds, to them who by patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for glory, honour, and immortality* ſhall be rendred *eternal life.* Rom. 2.6. 7. *Every man ſhall receive his own reward according to his own labour.* 1 Cor. 3.8. And S. *Paul*, to incourage the *Corinthians*, tells them that we Chriſtians are en-

entred into a race, at the end where-
1 *Cor.*9.24. of we may ſee the Laurel, *palmam in ſtadio poſitam*, a glorious prize, an incorruptible crown, if we will run and ſtrive for it; and he likewiſe
*Eph.*6.8. tells the *Epheſians*, that *whatſoever good thing any man doth, the ſame ſhall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* S. *Peter* alſo teacheth that we ſhould be mov'd and incourag'd, by the greatneſs of the promiſed reward, to forſake our luſts, and wholly devote our ſelves to
2 *Pet.*1.4. God; *exceeding great and glorious promiſes are given unto us, that by theſe you might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having eſcaped the pollution that is*
*Heb.*5.9. *in the world through luſt. Chriſt is become the author of eternal ſalvation to them that obey him,* (not to thoſe who hope and roll, and take hold:) and ſo the reſult of all theſe may be comprehended in the exhortation of
1 *Cor.* 15. 58. S. *Paul*: *My Beloved Brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* In this ſenſe good works are meritorious, in that they procure us a reward, a reward infinitely greater than their own deſert.

But

But, Though it may incourage us to love that gracious God who gives so very much for that little we are able to do, yet love its ſelf is not Mercenary; *charity doth not ſeek her own* (ſaith S. *Paul*,) we may deſire our promiſed reward and ſet our affections upon it, as it is a demonſtration of Gods infinite love and goodneſs: or becauſe it will be the expreſſing of our duty and thankfulneſs, when we ſhall love and glorifie and adore God perfectly and for ever: or rather becauſe the reward is God himſelf, who will be to every faithful ſervant, his *exceeding great reward*, as well as to faithful *Abraham*: rewarding ſincere obedience with the fruition of himſelf, being all in all to his Saints. But ſtill I ſay, love is not ſelfiſh, but free and generous, if nothing were to be gain'd by it, it would have ſatisfaction enough in ſhewing its ſelf: 'tis an unſpeakable pleaſure to a devout lover to act and labour for *JESUS*, when he thus thinks with himſelf; by the performance of this duty, by this act of vertue, by this good work, I ſerve my deareſt Lord, I oblige my beſt

§. 5. *Love is noble and generous.* 1 *Cor.* 13. 5

Gen. 15. 4.

friend; I expreſs my love to him whoſe infinite kindneſs to me hath conquer'd my heart, whom I love as my own ſoul, and for whom I would willingly die. O happy ſoul, who feeleſt what an exceeding joy it is to love JESUS! or rather unhappy ſoul, who canſt ſhew ſo little love to JESUS! Unhappy neceſſities of a frail body, unhappy diſtractions of a troubleſome world! Why am I, by you depriv'd of the continual pleaſure of waiting continually on my Divine and moſt loving Maſter? But bleſſed be my gracious Lord, that I might have more opportunities of pleaſing him, and expreſſing my affections to him, he hath made vertues of neceſſities, he hath turn'd nature into grace, and of humane duties he hath made acts of Religion in relieving mine own and others wants. If I obſerve the rules of ſobriety and charity, he takes thence occaſion to bleſs and reward me, as if he were thereby glorified, in diſcharging the duties of my place and calling. If I am diligent and faithful; though my work be never ſo mean, he owns it as a ſervice done to him. *Servants* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *obey*

obey your maſters in all things, and do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that of the Lord ye ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye ſerve the Lord Chriſt. Col. 3. 22, 23.

If I am conſciencious in all my ways and works, he takes it as a mark of my love and part of my duty to him. O that the conſtant courſe of my converſation might ſpeak the ſincerity of my affection to my Bleſſed Lord. Deareſt JESUS, the Croſs thou didſt bear for me was heavy and painful to extremity: but thy yoke is light and pleaſant, thy ſervice is perfect freedom. O let it be my delight and daily imployment as it is my duty, to ſerve and obey thee, to follow thy bleſſed example and be inſtrumental in winning hearts to thee: let me love thee ſo intirely that I may love nothing but thee, nothing but for thy ſake; *Fac precor Domine, me guſtare per amorem quod guſto per cognitionem, ſentiam per affectum, quod ſentio per intellectum. Amen.* B. Anſel.

§. 6. *We belong to Jeſus and are not our own.*

Love regards not ſo much what is commanded, as who it is that commands it; if it be the Beloved requires any thing, love doth it cheerfully without reluctancy; another with earneſt begging ſhould not have that granted, which the leaſt word of a friend ſhall obtain. The commands of Chriſtianity are eaſie and moſt rational, in keeping of them conſiſteth our preſent and future happineſs: Yet the true lover of JESUS looks farther, he conſiders that it is his God and Saviour who would have him obey, he to whom he belongs, to whom he ows himſelf and infinitely more: for every Chriſtian ows JESUS to JESUS, who gave himſelf for him. The old ſaying was *emendus cui imperes*, buy your ſlaves; buy thoſe that will be commanded by you; none of us can ſay ſo to the God whom we ſerve, for he hath indeed bought us; *Ye are not your own* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *ye are bought with a price*, thence it is ſtrongly infer'd, therefore glorifie God, in your body and in your ſpirit which are Gods. We are not at our own diſpoſe, our Divine

vine Maſter hath a moſt juſt propriety in us; we are wholly his: and would to God, we were his as much by affection and reſignation, as by right; the price he hath paid for us, is no leſs than himſelf; he hath given his life that ours might be his; *we were redeem'd from our vain converſation by the precious blood of Chriſt*, who died for us, that we might live to him, he could get nothing by that dear purchaſe, but our love only, for we were his before, it is he that made us: only we had eſtrang'd our ſelves from him, and plac't our love upon other things, and he could not count us his own while we loved him not.

§. 7. *Meditation on our obligation to ſerve* JESUS.

I muſt therefore conſider whoſe I am; I am Chriſts by a ſtrong and inconteſtable title; while I ſerve him I do that proper work which belongs to me; whilſt I obey what he hath commanded, I do what is infinitely my duty, what his love to me challengeth, and what my love to him deſires to return. Had I ten thouſand years to live, and could I ſerve him all that while and do nothing elſe, I could not repay him for the leaſt

part of that great ranſom he hath paid for me, neither could I deſerve any thing of thoſe great wages which he will give me: my life is but ſhort and he allows me time for other things, even for pleaſure and recreation. I have therefore a moſt gracious Maſter, and therefore I reſolve and promiſe to do what he requires of me; I will except at nothing he commands, it ſhall be my joy to pay my duty to him; and I will make it appear that I ſerve out of love and affection. O my deareſt *JESUS*, would my heart did feel what it ſhould; would I could expreſs what it feels; and would I could perform as much as I expreſs: But O my Bleſſed Lord, how frequently and unhappily do I forget that thou art my Maſter, and I thy ſervant; that my chiefeſt buſineſs is to do thy will, and that my greateſt happineſs as well as duty, is to obey thee? Is it not becauſe I alſo forget that thou didſt redeem me from a moſt wretched ſlavery; that thou didſt pay an immenſe price for me; that thou becameſt a ſervant for me, before thou requiredſt any ſervice

Væ miſeræ animæ quæ Chriſtum non quærit nec amat, arida manet & miſera, &c. Aug. Man.

vice from me; and that thou didſt firſt love me before thou did intreat my love? O thou great Lover and Saviour of men, I wholly give my ſelf to thee, body and ſoul, heart and affections; I deſire to be thine; I pray that thou wouldſt make me to be thine, and that thou wouldſt own me for thine, that ſo thou mayſt be mine to eternity. *Wouldſt thou know* (ſaith S. *Aug.*) *what thou muſt give for heaven? give thy ſelf, that's the price; nothing leſs will ſerve, that alone is accounted ſufficient: heaven is worth juſt what thou art, give thy ſelf and thou ſhalt certainly have it.* Do not men ſeek to ſerve and oblige great perſons expecting to be by them gratified? are they not ambitious to wait upon Princes in regard of an Honourable ſtipend? and why ſhould I not count it the greateſt Honour and preferment to ſerve the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? The ſalary he pays his ſervants is infinitely greater than any the greateſt Monarch can give; they oftentimes caſt off with diſgrace their moſt faithful officers: my Lord is ſo far from ſo doing, that he bears

Aliud non quærit precium niſi te ipſum; tantum valet quantum es, te da & habebis illud. Manual.

with the faults of his meaneſt ſervants, and never turns out any that will live with him. 'Tis highly difficult to become a Prince his favorite, many ſpend their time, their wealth and themſelves, and never can get the leaſt ſhare in his affections; but I am ſure my heavenly Maſter loveth me; I know it by what he hath done, by what he daily doth, and by what he hath declar'd he would do for me: Although he hath bought me, and ſo might well require the utmoſt I can do, without any reward: yet he hires me and gives me more, infinitely more than I can earn. I will therefore be diligent, faithful and zealous in fulfilling the work he hath appointed me. I will often ſay to my ſelf; *I am a ſervant and a lover of* JESUS, *I am a ſervant and a lover of* JESUS. I will every morning conſider, what can I do this day of what my Lord hath commanded me? what duties of *ſobriety*, *righteouſneſs or godlineſs* can I diſcharge to make it appear that JESUS is the Maſter I own and obey? *None of us liveth to himſelf, and no man dies to himſelf, for whether we live we live unto the Lord,*

Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9.

or

or whether we die we die unto the Lord: Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lords; for to this end Christ both died and roſe and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

§. 8. *Our love and obedience God requires.*

This double duty of dying unto ſin and living unto righteouſneſs, abſteining from that which is evil and doing that which is good, I am oblig'd to perform by ſtrong and indiſpenſible obligations: if I do not, I certainly periſh. When we ſay, in common ſpeaking, that we do things out of love, we mean that we are free, and may chuſe whether we do them or no, we are not bound to it: but here all along where I undertake to diſcharge the duties of Religion out of love; I do not in the leaſt mean ſo. I acknowledge my ſelf under the greateſt neceſſity of diſcharging my baptiſmal vow, of living according to the Goſpel Rule, otherwiſe my neglect of it would be my ruine, I ſhould periſh in my diſobedience. Love it ſelf is a duty, *the firſt and greateſt commandment: thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind.* I recommend love Mat. 22. 37

Meliores quos dirigit amor, plures quos corrigit timor. Aug.

therefore, as the noblest, the most powerful motive to a Religious obedience; as that which makes our duty easie and pleasant, and gives a value to what we do or suffer for God. I know there is those who teach that, by our well-doing we must not seek for salvation, and that our obedience is not requir'd to our justification, but may be a mark or an effect of it, faith having done the work before; but this groundless and mischievous opinion is contradicted by thousands of plain expres Scriptures, *He that heareth these sayings of mine and doth them not, is like the man that built his house upon the sand. Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my father which is in heaven. If thou wilt enter life, keep the Commandments*: and innumerable others, with all those that affirm, that God shall judge and reward every man according as his works have been.

No, the holy Religion we profess requires a conformity betwixt the Holy *JESUS* and his followers; that by a devout imitation we should

copy

copy his example: that we ſhould be fruitful in good works, and by a ſincere and univerſal obedience ſerve God all days of our life; *For if the word ſpoken by Angels was ſtedfaſt, and every tranſgreſſion and diſobedience received a juſt recompence of reward: how ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great a ſalvation*; by being diſobedient to our Lord JESUS, who having wrought and reveal'd it, offers it to us, on the condition of an affectionate obedience to his Goſpel? *The earth which drinketh the rain that cometh upon it — and beareth thorns and briers, is rejected and nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burnt*; ſuch is their condition who receiving the heavenly dew of Divine Grace, in their admiſſion into, and profeſſion of Chriſtianity, yet ſtill remain barren, or bring forth evil fruit: *But beloved* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *we are perſwaded better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation: for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have ſhewed towards his name; and we deſire that every one of you do ſhew the ſame diligence, to the full aſſurance of hope unto the end.* He ſays not, we deſire that you may be con-

Heb. 2. 2, 3.

Heb. 6. 7, &c.

confident and perſwaded of your ſalvation, but that, by love and diligent obedience, ye may aſcertain your hope, *make your calling and election ſure*, as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, for indeed, *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for us that whether we wake or ſleep we ſhould live together with him*, in holineſs of life, *worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, for we are Gods work-manſhip created in Jeſus Chriſt unto good works, which God hath ordained that we ſhould walk in them.* This then is the way wherein of neceſſity we muſt walk, that as we ingag'd and promis'd when we were Baptized into Chriſt, ſo we ſhould live ever after: which S. *Paul* expreſſeth thus, *As ye have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk ye in him:* and again, *walk worthy of the Lord, being fruitful in every good work*, This is the rule whereby we muſt order the courſe of our lives, that *our converſation be as becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt*; that *our converſation be in heaven whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; that *whatſoever things are true, honeſt, juſt, pure, lovely, of good*

1 Pet. 1. 10.

1 Theſ. 5. 9, 10.

Epheſ. 4. 1.

Epheſ. 2. 10

Col. 2. 6.

Col. 1. 10.

Phil. 1. 27. 3. 20. 4. 8.

good report, any vertue, any thing praiſe-worthy, may be our conſtant ſtudy and practice, We muſt labour *that whether preſent or abſent we may be accepted of our Lord, becauſe we ſhall all appear before him and receive according as we obey him, now in his abſence.* 2 Cor. 5. 9.

§. 9. *Incouragements to obey Jeſus.*

All this, and much more to the ſame purpoſe, which I have read and obſerved in the Sacred Books of the New Teſtament, hath convinc'd me that it is the deſign of Chriſtian Religion to make me meek and humble, ſober and contented, juſt and charitable, devout and religious, vertuous and holy: this I own to be my duty, and I will indeavour my ſelf heartily to perform the ſame. And that I may do it with cheerfulneſs and affection, I will ſtir and quicken the holy fire of love in my heart, by pious conſiderations. When any duty to God or man calls upon me for action and performance, and I find in my ſoul too much of dulneſs or reluctancy, I will again by meditation ſuppoſe my dying Saviour preſent, telling me, how much he hath done and ſuffered for me, and deſiring me,

me, as I love him, to do that duty which lies before me. Chriſtian, if thou doſt underſtand the greatneſs of my love which brought me here to die for thee; if thou art ſenſible of it, and wouldſt make any return for it, do this, obey this command; this may be the laſt thing thou ſhalt ever do for me, this may be the laſt tryal of thy love: ſure it would grieve thee to have denied this ſmall requeſt to him that gives his life, that gives himſelf for thee. Or elſe I will ſuppoſe my ſelf in the preſence of my Divine Maſter ſitting on his heavenly throne with his glorified ſervants about him, ſhewing me the crown he hath aſſign'd to me, and ſaying; N. N. wilt thou deny to do this at my earneſt requeſt? wilt thou be ſo unkind to me? Sure I have deſerved better at thy hands than ſo; ſure I, who am much above thee, have done much more for thee, than that comes to; but beſides, I would highly recompence thee. Theſe my friends I have rewarded with the bliſs and glory they enjoy, for having done ſuch things for me: and I would reward thee as bountifully: here is eternal life, eternal reſt, eternal glory

glory for thy recompence: as thou loveſt me, as thou loveſt thy ſelf, obey, that thou maiſt be happy. To this, what anſwer could I make, but ſuch as this? Lord not only this, but any thing elſe thou haſt commanded, I am willing to fulfil and obey. I bewail my dulneſs and depraved nature that makes me ſo unready, ſo unactive in thy ſervice: but Lord thou knoweſt that I love thee. I would undertake any labour, any trouble to make it appear; I would die to juſtifie it. Yet, ſweeteſt *JESU*, I beg of thee to increaſe my love; to increaſe it to ſuch a degree that, like thy heavenly attendants, I may burn with that Divine fire, and be all love to thee: that ſo I may be always "prepar'd and deſirous to do thy "will. Stir up, we beſeech thee, O "Lord, the wills of thy faithful peo- "ple, that they plenteouſly bringing "forth the fruit of good works, may "of thee be plenteouſly rewarded "through *JESUS* Chriſt our Lord. "Amen. *Love is the fulfilling of the "Law.*

Sund. 25. after Trinity.

Chriſtian Reader, I hope that what I have writ, thou wilt alſo read and repeat heartily in the firſt Perſon:

ſon: for to that end I have thus contriv'd it to ingage thine affections, to make thee ſpeak, as of thy ſelf, theſe ſoliloquies, acts of love, and acts of reſolution which run throughout the whole diſcourſe, and I would have thee uſe that method, which may much affect thee; to make dialogues betwixt thy Saviour and thy ſoul, and betwixt thy ſoul and thy ſelf; for certain it is, that for thee N. N. by name, *JESUS* was crucified and died; and certain it is, that thou thy ſelf ſhalt die and be judged, and riſe again to an intolerable eternity, if by careleſsneſs and inconſideration thou haſt been unmindful of thy Lord and thy ſoul: or elſe riſe again to eternal joys, if thou haſt ſincerely lov'd and ſerv'd *JESUS*; *If ye keep my Commandments, ye ſhall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Fathers Commandments, and abide in his love.*

Joh. 15, 10

§. 10. *Of free-will-offerings.*

Thus much of neceſſity muſt be done; my duty as well as my love conſtrains me to it. Not to break negative precepts and to obey poſitive ones, (that is, to ceaſe from ſin and to work righteouſneſs,) is required

red of me; if I do it by love, I have made my task pleaſant: but yet a task it is, which muſt be fulfill'd. Not but that there is mercy for ſins againſt the New-covenant, for the tranſgreſſion of Goſpel precepts; there is joy in heaven at the converſion of a ſinner, what ever his ſins have been; and it ought greatly to indear God to us, that he is ſo willing to forgive; ſo deſirous to have us repent, that we may be capable of his pardon: but whether ſoon or late, whether after crying guilts or ordinary ſins, ſtill I ſay, there muſt be a true contrition, a ſorrow and repentance for our ſins, proceeding from the love of God, and a ſincere indeavour to pleaſe and obey him for the future; and ſo, thus far we are drawn by a moral neceſſity, by the deſire of our own happineſs, which is not to be obtain'd any other way. But ſhall we ſtay juſt here, and not go one ſtep further than is required? 'tis well indeed when we are ſafe, and that muſt be ſecur'd firſt of all, and with the greateſt care; but ſhall our love proceed no further? Sure that Chriſtian who is beſt aſſur'd of his ſalvation, will love God moſt of all and make

make to him the greateſt and moſt hearty returns. When a man is qualified for heaven and enjoys the greateſt happineſs this world is capable of; that is, a ſenſe of Gods favour and a well-grounded aſſurance of a future bliſs, his ſoul cannot but melt into the moſt affectionate love for that gracious God, whoſe mercy and loving kindneſs hath brought him into that happy condition and fitted him by his grace for a much happier; and they, I ſay, that are in ſuch a caſe (for to them only I now ſpeak) may well do ſomething more, than what needs they muſt; may well enlarge their affections to God, beyond the bounds of preſcribed duties, it is a good ſign, a ſign of a ſincere and a pious heart, when a man is forward to undertake for God: when he doth not weigh grains and ſcruples, leſt he ſhould part with any of his right and liberty: but affords God a full meaſure and running over, and think he never gives enough, and ſtill deſires that he might do infinitely more for him. 'Tis true that properly ſpeaking, all is due to God: and the more any, the beſt Chriſtian returns, the more he hath receiv'd, and ſo the more

more he is indebted; but yet, God is pleas'd not to require all that he gives, nor all that we may give, that we may have wherewith to make a free-will-offering; that we may have ſomething to give him, that he requires not, tokens of our greater love and gratitude. It was foretold that under the Goſpel, *in the day of Chriſts power, his people ſhould offer him free-will-offerings with an holy worſhip.* Pſal. 110. 3 And *David* himſelf, under the Law, was at his *quid retribuam? what ſhall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me?* Pſal. 116. Though the benefits which God vouchſafed his people then, were much inferior to thoſe he hath ſince beſtowed upon us; (*for eye had not* then *ſeen nor ear heard, neither was it entred into the heart of man*, what great things God would do for them that love him, as he hath now declar'd in the revelations of his Goſpel,) though he had tied them to a burthenſome and moſt expenſive ſervice: yet he accepted their voluntary vows and ingagements, and was well pleas'd with them: yet he would receive their free-will-offerings, and delight in them. And ſure

ſure we are more oblig'd than the Jews to let our love and gratitude break forth beyond the limits of commands and expreſs injunctions: and now that God hath open'd to us his rareſt treaſures, his own boſome, for to give us his beloved Son, he will not reject our free oblations, the voluntary acknowledgments of his undeſerved and unſpeakable mercies. 'Tis not to be denied (without giving the lie to the learning and piety of the beſt Chriſtians in all ages) but that there is in the New Teſtament counſels as well as precepts, ſome things recommended, though not commanded; he that ſells all that he hath for to buy *the pearl of great price*, and they that make themſelves *Eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven*, were not injoyn'd ſo to do, but are well approv'd of: and that God who gives a plentiful harveſt to him that ſows bountifully, is doubtleſs well-pleaſed, with his open handedneſs and charitable profuſion. And as it is the beſt indication of a devout and loving ſoul, cheerfully to exceed what is ſtrictly required: it is alſo the beſt fence to immure and ſecure our duty; for then, when we

2 *Cor.* 9. 6.

ſlack

ſlack and abate, we may be ſtill within our due bounds; nay more, I am confident that as it is beſt and ſafeſt, it is alſo eaſier, to give free-will-offerings, than only, juſt to pay the daily commanded ſacrifice, becauſe thoſe proceed from affection, theſe perhaps only from injunction. He that is deſired to go one mile and goes two or ten, finds his way pleaſant, for love leads him: but he that is preſt to the ſame journey, and is acted by fear and compulſion, while he reſolves not to go one foot farther than needs he muſt, will eaſily be tempted to ſtay one ſhort of what he ſhould. But this is better underſtood by the devout lovers of *JESUS* than I can expreſs it. "Precepts are "given to all men as tri- "butes are exacted of all: "(ſaith an Ancient guide "of ſouls) but as in the "world, great perſons and "favourites not only pay "the tax, but alſo offer preſents "and gifts to the Prince: ſo in the "Church, the moſt Religious obſerve "not only the precepts, but alſo in- "timations and counſels, and give to "God, not only what he exacts, but "alſo

Οὐ μόνον τὰς ἐντολὰς ἐφύλαξαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ δῶρα προσήνεγκαν τῷ Θεῷ. *Beat. Doroth. Doct.* 1.

"also free oblations, all that they "are able. How many thousands of Saints, now in heaven, have taken this course? how many that now wear the bright crown of virginity, might have injoy'd the comforts of marriage, had not the love of JESUS prevail'd over their natural desires? how many who might have possest great estates, injoy now the greater treasures of eternity, for having made themselves poor, to relieve the needy members of JESUS? how many who now sit on thrones of glory, have chosen here to follow JESUS in meanness and humility, when honours and worldly pomps were at their command? how many are now rewarded with high degrees of everlasting bliss, for having spent their short time upon earth in serving JESUS, when they might have spent it upon their own profit or pleasure? and how many now living, aspire to the same felicities and recompences, by cheerfully following the same ways, and expressing a sincere and unbounded love, by such free oblations? *Cur non possum quod isti & istæ?* Why can't I do what these my Christian Brothers

S. *Aug.*

thers and Siſters have done, and do ſtill? hath not God done as great things for me as for them? hath he not given me the ſame promiſes as they had? do not I hope to be their companion and fellow citizen in heaven? And why then can't I love as much as they did? I ſhould therefore, and do reſolve to make no reſervations; JESUS ſhall have the command of all he hath given me, of all he hath enabled me to do; I ſhall keep nothing from him which may expreſs my love and gratitude, and do him ſervice. Dearеſt JESUS, I know I can never do for thee ſo much as I ſhould, and I know that I ſhall never do ſo much as I would; thou gaveſt thy ſelf for me, and thou wilt give thy ſelf to me: and Lord, what am I worth, and what is the worth of all I can do? It is a great favour that thou wilt accept of me and my weak indeavours. I know that if heaven were capable of any grief, it would be only that we have not lov'd thee enough upon earth; when thou filleſt our ſouls with thy Divine and raviſhing joys, we ſhall wiſh we had done nothing here, but ſerve and love

love thee. O give me grace now whilſt I live, to do what I ſhall wiſh to have done when I die; let me do now I am abſent from thee, what I ſhall wiſh to have done when I dwell with thee; let me love thee infinitely and without meaſure.

Modus amandi Deum ſine modo. S. Bern.

§. 11. *Of our obedience to the Church.*

The firſt inſtance of our love in this way of free-will-offerings ſhould be a pious obedience to our Mother the Church; not but that it is many ways requir'd, but becauſe 'tis almoſt wholly neglected. What by pride and refractorineſs, what by ignorance and indevotion, and what by looſeneſs and irreligion, that obedience which ought to be paid to *thoſe that have the rule over us in the Lord*, to the ſtanding rules and orders of our Spiritual governors, is ſo generally laid aſide, that many that would, yet dare not preſs it upon the people; and that, even they that obey, do it ſecretly, and, as though 'twere diſhonourable, are in a manner aſham'd to own it; Hence comes that great neglect of Confirmation, that moſt neceſſary and Ancient,

cient, if not Apoſtolick conſtitution; hence the deſuetude of faſting upon appointed days, and even of bidding of them: and the non-obſervance of Holy-days, and times of ſolemn devotion; hence the ſlight regard had to the publick worſhip of God, and the ſeldom receiving of the Lords Supper; hence the reſervedneſs & unhappy ſecreſie of moſt people in not acquainting their ſpiritual guides with the ſtate of their conſcience when it needs, and not receiving their comforts and directions; hence the not ſending for the elders of the Church to do their office upon ſick perſons, and the ſeldom deſiring their abſolution; and hence even in too many of the Clergy, the neglect of daily ſaying Divine Offices, as they are commanded, and obſerving other injunctions peculiar to them. I may ſay that it fares with our Church as with ſome Princes, who have their due Sovereignty denied them becauſe they are Chriſtians: (as if by becoming members and defenders of the Church, they were become ſubject to Pontifical Chairs and Puritan Synods) for ſo, many would not have this Church obey'd be-

cauſe 'tis Reformed; they would not have its laws obſerv'd, becauſe it makes them inferior to Gods; as though, by not impoſing a blind ſuperſtitious, and overſevere obedience, as *Rome* doth, this Church were become uncapable of exerciſing any authority over her children and requiring any duty from them. But I ſay, let thoſe that love *JESUS* amend this, for his ſake: for the Church is his ſpouſe and hath receiv'd her power from him; let them yield a free and Religious obedience to Eccleſiaſtical injunctions, becauſe *JESUS* hath ſaid, *he that receiveth you receiveth me.* It is doubtleſs our duty ſo to do: and I am ſure it will be a good token of a pious heart, when we ſhall obey them in the Lord, whom the Lord hath ſet over us. We ſhall make it appear that we own the Authority of our heavenly King, when we are ſubject to thoſe his officers, by whom he now reigns over us: to whom he hath given the keys of his kingdom, and whom he hath appointed Stewards of his ſaving Myſteries: we ſhall have a ſhare in the Myſterious repreſentation of the great expiatory ſacrifice,

ſacrifice, which by the Church is celebrated in the Euchariſt, and in thoſe Divine Services and ſolemn Prayers which the Church offers to God daily: and we ſhall receive the full benefit of being members of the Church and holding communion with it; if this were not abſolutely requir'd, yet I am ſure it will be a very acceptable free-will-offering, if we do it devoutly and joyfully, becauſe we love JESUS; and this Chriſtian obedience to the known, rational, and pious orders of the Church, will anſwer the beſt part of that ancient and ſo much magnified ſelf-abnegation, vow'd by the Cœnobites, when they gave up themſelves to be in all things rul'd and commanded by their ſuperiors: and it will exerciſe thoſe two heavenly graces, meekneſs and humility, which the world deſpiſeth, but all true Chriſtians own to be moſt Divine: as they that bring *reſt to the ſoul*, and make us moſt conformable to the meek and humble JESUS. *Mat.* 11. 29

§. 12. *Of ſeveral voluntary oblations.*

As for corporal auſterities commanded or uncommanded, I have ſaid

ſomething of them already: and the chiefeſt uſe and deſign of them is to mortifie ſenſual luſts, and to keep under the body that the ſpirit may rule and be obey'd; yet, as they are exerciſes of repentance, marks of the juſt indignation we conceive againſt our ſelves for having diſpleas'd God; as they may effect or expreſs a diſreliſh of temporal pleaſures, a longing for heavenly joys, and an indeavour to take up our croſs and follow *JESUS*; they may be the matter of a free-will-offering, and they may find a gracious reward and acceptance in ſo much as they proceed from a ſincere love to *JESUS*. Prayer alſo, thankſgiving, reading, meditation, acts of Religion; though, as to the ſubſtance, they be the diſcharge of the greateſt duty God requires of us, the worſhip and adoration of his Divine Majeſty: yet as to the quantity, they may become free oblations, the expreſſions of a greater love. He that with devout affections inlargeth his offices, or counts the frequency of them by Canonical hours and wiſh't for opportunities: and he that ſets apart large portions for religious exerciſes,

ſes, or in the following of his neceſſary buſineſs, doth often lift up his heart and thoughts to heaven and heavenly things, makes a voluntary offering of ſome of his time, to him of whoſe eternity he hopes to be partaker. He that defalks ſome hours from the refreſhment of his body, to beſtow them upon his ſoul; he that chuſeth a meaner condition and imployment, that having fewer avocations he may ſpend more time upon Religion; and he that bears with ſome wrongs and injuries, that being free from the diſtractions of quarrels and law-ſuits, he may be the better diſpos'd to ſerve God, hath bought the bleſſed opportunity of attending JESUS and indearing himſelf to him. Charity likewiſe, whether Spiritual or Corporal, whether in giving or in forgiving may be carried further than is abſolutely required, and ſo become a free oblation. He that takes great pains to inſtruct the ignorant, to convert ſinners, by all means to win ſouls to JESUS, may manifeſt a greater love than was abſolutely neceſſary to his own ſalvation; and he that makes it his buſineſs and delight to pre-

vent quarrels or make reconciliations; to comfort and defend the afflicted, and oppressed, to visit hospitals and relieve the poor; and to spend all his substance in pious uses, for the honour of God, and Religion, and for the present and future happiness of men, may exceed what God would have rewarded, and by shewing so great a love inrich his crown of glory and recompence. I only mark the head-springs or storehouses of those arbitrary gifts wherewith men may honour God and enrich themselves: the several emanations and offerings which may proceed from them, being free and innumerable, cannot be specified, and should not be impos'd. Where there is love there is a willing mind: and *where there is a willing mind a man* (in other cases as well as in charity) 2 Cor. 8. 12. *is accepted, according to what he hath and not according to what he hath not.*

Εἴδον παρὰ γεωργοῖς ἐν σπέρμα παρ' ἀμφοτέρους, &c. S. Johan. Clim. Grad. 26. §. 43.

"Some husbandmen sow "that they may have "wherewith to pay their "debts, (which marks "the labours and offer-"ings of penitents, who "indeavour to make what satisfaction

"ſatisfaction they can for their in-
"juries to God or man.) Some ſow
"that by the expected crop they
"may increaſe their wealth; (which
"repreſents the good works of more
"innocent perſons, who aſpire to a
"great reward and a glorious crown.)
"Some ſow that they may have ſome-
"thing wherewith to expreſs their
"gratitude and make preſents to
"their kind land-lord or benefa-
"ctor; (whereby is ſignified the
"beſt of Chriſtians, who in all things
"ſeek and deſign the glory and advan-
"tage of their Lord.) And others
"ſow that they may be thought di-
"ligent, and receive commendati-
"ons from the paſſers by; (theſe
"are an emblem of the moſt im-
"perfect Chriſtians, who in Gods
"ſervice ſeek their own glory, and
"of whom our Bleſſed Saviour ſays
"that they have their reward.) How-
ever all muſt ſow; and every one
as he doth it, ſparingly or bounti-
fully, ſo ſhall he reap at laſt. But
heaven is a cheap purchaſe, give we
never ſo dear for it. "The Goſpel *Decay of*
"reveals and offers a glorious king- *Chriſtian*
"dom great and eternal felicities: *Piety.*
"but he that expects their poſſeſſion

"becauſe he reads and believes
"them, is like him that ſhould fanſie
"the whole world ſhall be his, be-
"cauſe he hath the Hiſtory or the
Eccluſ. 37. 11. "Map thereof. *Conſult not* then *with a coward in matters of war*, as the Son of *Sirach* adviſeth; conſult not with an irreligious age in matters of Piety and Religion: and think it not enough to do as the moſt do. When firſt Chriſtian Religion was preach't in the world, and men underſtood what *JESUS* had done for them, and what he had promis'd, they thought nothing too much, nor too good for him: they chearfully parted with temporal pleaſures, honors and riches: with their liberties, their limbs, blood, their very lives, that they might be faithful to *JESUS* and come to reign with him: they made it appear by their patient, chearful, and magnanimous ſufferings, that they valued nothing but *JESUS* and eternity. We are not now expos'd to the ſame dangers for the belief and profeſſion of Chriſtianity: but the commands thereof may have Martyrs as well as the Creed; the ſame Lord and Saviour requires our obedience to the one, who

who exacts our faith to the other; he that ſpends his life in the obſervance of his Lords precepts and counſels, in thus *confeſſing of him before men*, may be intitled to as great a reward, as he that dies, that he may not renounce his Religion and deny his Faith. I need not inſert cautions againſt vain glory and ſelf complacency after we have done the moſt we are able: for if it proceeds not from the love of God, it is nothing worth; and if it doth, it will never bring pride nor vanity. *Charity vanteth not it ſelf, and is not puffed up:* Only in the words of a pious Saint, "If we had "died a thouſand times "for JESUS, yet we "ſhould not have repaid "him the leaſt part of "what we owe his infinite mercy "and condeſcenſion: for vaſt is the "difference betwixt the blood of "God, and the blood of his crea-"tures and ſervants, if we judge ac-"cording to the dignity, and not to "the ſubſtance of it. *What haſt thou, that thou haſt not received?* remember what JESUS ſaith to all Chri-

1 *Cor.* 13. 4.

Ἐι χὴ μυείους θανάτους ὑπὲρ Χριστῦ ὑπομείνομεν, &c. S. Johan. Clim. Grad. 23. 11.

*Mat.*10.37 ſtians, *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth ſon or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me:* and *whoſoever* *Luk.*14.33 *he be of you that forſaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my diſciple.* We can never do too much for *JESUS*: but we may eaſily do too little; though the moſt we can do will never merit heaven, yet the leaſt we may do ſhall not obtain it: 'tis ſafe and impoſſible to exceed, but 'tis eaſie and dangerous to be defective.

6. Sunday after Trinity.

"O God, who haſt prepared for "them that love thee ſuch good "things as paſs mans nnderſtand-"ing, pour into our hearts ſuch love "towards thee, that we loving thee "above all things, may obtain thy "promiſes which exceed all that we "can deſire, through *JESUS* Chriſt "our Lord, Amen.

I have now aſſign'd love its full task; to repent, and mortifie our luſts, to ſerve and obey God, and to abound in good works even free-will-offerings. I have no more for it to do; I would only have it to increaſe, to grow towards perfection, to be conſtant, and to indure unto the end. To help this forward, and

and to conclude I have here added four conſiderations, wherewith to aſſiſt and incourage the ſincere lover of *JESUS* to the diſcharge of this great and bleſſed duty, *the work and labour of love.*

The firſt is, that it is moſt unjuſt and unreaſonable to love any creature to the prejudice of the Creator. As all things have their being from God, ſo they have from him all the goodneſs and beauty which makes them lovely to us: and God drawing upon viſible objects fair copies of his inviſible perfections, deſign'd to be lov'd in them: or that they ſhould be lov'd in him, and for his ſake. §. 13. *That God ſhould be loved above all things.*

If men being delighted with the beauty of the heavenly hoſt took them to be gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is, for the firſt Author of beauty hath created them: for by the beauty and greatneſs of the creatures proportionably the maker of them is ſeen. Beauty and goodneſs are the proper object of love: and therefore, God who is the firſt and ſupreme beauty and goodneſs, ſhould be loved before all things. We indeed reverence Princes in their ſeals and arms, in their meaneſt ſervants cloth'd with their livery: but *Wiſd.* 13. 3. 5.

but ſhould a ſubject ſet up theſe in the royal throne, and transfer to them, or even to the greateſt Favorite, thoſe ſpecial honours which belong to the Prince only: he ſhould juſtly be deem'd a Rebel, and his proceedings would be as unjuſtifiable, as the diſloyal diſtinction of *taking arms by the Kings Authority againſt his Perſon.* Yet ſuch are the proceedings of all diſorderly lovers, I mean of all ſinners: who ſetting more of their affections upon the creatures, than upon God the Creator, pay them afterwards a greater veneration than they do to him; having exalted honours, pleaſures, and riches into the Imperial chair, they do more for them than for the Sovereign himſelf: nay they obey them to his prejudice, and againſt his expreſs command. Thus vicious unreaſonable men burn in the ſhade, and freeze where the Sun ſhines; they dote upon inferior beauties, and neglect the higheſt and moſt perfect; they take fire at dark ſhadows, and find no heat in the brighteſt light. Great men have a reſpect paid them, in their degenerating poſterity: great Artiſts are reſpected

in

in their liveleſs children; we highly honour unhappy Pagans in thoſe labors of theirs which adorn our cloſets and libraries: God only is diſhonour'd in his works, the more perfect he hath made them, the more injurious they prove to him. *Phidias* and *Apelles* are remembred with veneration, in a fine picture or Statue: God only is ingratefully forgotten in a lovely creature whereof he is Maker. An abſurd impiety this is, which *Seneca* reprov'd in his Fellow-heathen, to worſhip and deifie the carved image, and to take no notice of the Carver that made it. God hath done like a loving father, who jealous of his ſons affection, would have none to tend him but ſuch as wear his livery; would have the picture of himſelf hang in every room; and all the goods in the houſe markt with his name and cypher: So God, who loves men tenderly, and deſires to be by them lov'd again, hath put ſomething of himſelf in all the creatures he hath appointed to ſerve us; that, which way ſoever we turn our eyes, we might be put in mind of him, he hath

Abſurdum eſt genu poſito ſimulacra adorare, & ſuſpicere, fabros vero quæ ea fecerunt contemnere.

hath ſtampt his name, in more or leſs legible Characters, upon all the goods and utenſils of this his great houſe, the world, wherein he hath plac'd us. And now ſhall we do like a ſimple child, who turning his back upon his father, ſhould look and ſmile on his picture, and careſs it, and wait upon it, and ask it bleſſing, while he ſlights the original? So abſurd a thing would be counted madneſs, and move pity or laughter: but when we act the ſame folly, in loving the world whilſt we deſpiſe God, we are highly criminal, & we highly provoke our heavenly Father, thus to return to him contempt & diſobedience for the gracious tokens of his love. From hence it follows, that as we ſhould love God above all, and all ~~things~~, things in him and for him: we ſhould alſo love thoſe things moſt, which have moſt of his impreſs and likeneſs. Therefore, man who is created after Gods image, ſhould be by us lov'd above all other creatures: and that part of man which is chiefly adorn'd with the likeneſs of God, ſhould have the greater ſhare of our affection. God himſelf values humane ſouls at a high rate, becauſe they

they are like him; as appears by what he hath done and ſuffered to ſave them. And for the ſame reaſon alſo, we ſhould pay to the ſouls of men the beſt part of that kindneſs we owe them: and if we do not, we give our friends no greater love than children to their puppets; for they dreſs them fine, and lay them ſoft, and kiſs and imbrace them: Juſt as they who aim at nothing more than to make their friends merry, to wiſh them toys and gaudy things and to ſee them at eaſe. A fondneſs inexcuſable in rational creatures, eſpecially in Chriſtians, who know the worth of an immortal ſoul and the great concern of Eternity: and yet ſeek only to gratifie the material part of their friends which is ſubject to corruption, and to ingage their affections to the world which paſſeth away and they muſt ſoon leave. As if when King *Edward* the firſt was haſtning out of the Holy-land hither to receive the Crown which expected him, his friends had ſtaid him by the way, and invited him to reſt and eaſe, and provided for him all Princely delights, and entertainments, and retarded his coming ſo long, till he had

had forgot or loſt his right and his kingdom. *What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world and loſe his ſoul? and what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* We are indeed much commanded *to love one another*, and in this conſiſteth one great half of our Religion, all juſtice and charity, and all the duties of the ſecond Table. To love our brother as we ought, is the beſt demonſtration of our love to God, for *he that ſays he loves God, and hateth his brother, is a liar*, ſaith S. *John*: and *love worketh no ill to his neighbour, and is therefore the fulfilling of the law*, ſaith S. *Paul*, but a man is to *love his neighbour as himſelf*, and therefore as he is moſt oblig'd to ſeek for himſelf *the kingdom of God and its righteouſneſs*: ſo ſhould he in the firſt place indeavour to procure it to his friend. Or elſe we are *to love one another as Chriſt hath loved us*: and that was in redeeming our ſouls and purchaſing for us heavenly joys and eternal life: not in providing eaſe and ſenſual pleaſures to our bodies here in this world. The reſult of this is, that in the firſt place we ſhould love

1 *Joh.* 4. 20
Rom. 13. 10
Mat. 19. 19.
Joh. 13. 33

God

God infinitely and for his own ſake: and that in the next, we ſhould love thoſe things moſt which have a neareſt relation to God; Grace and Vertue, Religion, Holineſs and Men; eſpecially their Souls, which are an image of the Deity; eſpecially ſanctified ſouls which are moſt like God. Afterwards our leſſer love for leſs Divine Objects, may be reaſonable and innocent: and however we have ſecur'd a great duty and a great happineſs. *To love God with all the heart, and with all the underſtanding, and with all the ſoul, and with all the ſtrength, and to love his neighbour as himſelf, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and ſacrifices.* *Mar.* 12.33

§. 14. *'Tis moſt juſt and eaſie to love God.*

A ſecond conſideration may be, that it is moſt juſt and eaſie to love God. That it is moſt juſt, is ſhown all along this diſcourſe, wherein I have repreſented the more general and moſt excellent benefits of God to mankind: all the which challenge and deſerve the greateſt love our hearts are capable of. God had requir'd of his people that the firſt-born and the firſt fruits ſhould be conſecrated to him, thereby to acknowledge him the

the author of all their bleſſings and the giver of all their increaſe: Now the firſt-born of our ſouls, the firſt-fruits of our hearts is love, which God, who gives us all things, demands as an acknowledgment from us. *thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy ſoul.* We therefore commit a greater ſacriledge if we deny him ſo juſt a tribute, than if a Jew had rob'd him of his firſt grapes or his firſt ears of corn. But it is ſo much the more juſt, in that it is moſt eaſie to love God. Infinite perfections, an abyſs of goodneſs whence rivers and oceans of good things do perpetually flow, one would think ſhould ſwallow up the hearts and affections of men: as indeed it doth, of all that duly conſider it. And more perfectly of beatified Saints, and of thoſe bleſſed ſpirits who miniſter before his throne and are all flame for him. Beſides, 'tis natural for men to love what is theirs, propriety begets or increaſeth love: Now God is our God; he hath given himſelf for us, he doth now, and will more intirely hereafter give himſelf to us; he made us for the injoyment of himſelf, and for that purpoſe

poſe he hath redeem'd us: and that we might all ſay, with *David*, *O God thou art my God*, that God might ſhew his kindneſs and indear himſelf to us, and aſſert our right to him, he hath aſſum'd the names of thoſe relations who love us beſt, whom we love moſt tenderly, and whom we count moſt ours. God the Father is pleas'd to be call'd our Father, God the Son, our Brother, and God the Holy Ghoſt our Comforter, as it were our friend: thereby to expreſs that affection which he hath for us, and the propriety which we may claim in him. Sure 'tis an eaſie thing to love them that love us: and where God hath expreſt ſo much love, 'tis ſtrangely unnatural if we are not affected with it. *Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts*, ſaith the Wiſeman: Now what gifts hath our God given us! or rather, what gifts hath he not given us! and what perverſe violence do they offer nature, that ſeek to confute *Solomons* ſaying, in this inſtance where it ſhould be moſt true. Certainly 'tis an eaſie thing to

Nimis durus eſt animus qui amorem eiſi nolebat dare, nolit tamen rependere. Aug.

Prov. 19. 6.

to love infinite perfections, and infinite goodness; one that ever did and ever doth us good; from whom we daily receive favours, so great and so many that we can tell neither their worth nor number: Wherefore S. *Aug.* saith, that to love God is so natural, so easie, so infinitely just, and so much our duty, that to omit it can admit of no plea nor pretence, and is inexcusable, and criminal in the highest degree. Perhaps thou wilt say, I cannot fast, I cannot weep, I have not what to give to the poor, but canst thou say I cannot love God? is there any obstacle in thy way? dost thou want inducements or a heart to do it? No, doubtless 'tis the easiest thing in the world to love him that is most lovely, to love our greatest benefactor, to love him who is infinitely kind and loving to us. Some vertues require opportunities and cannot be exercised for want of them: but whether thou beest sickly or healthy, whether thy condition be high or low,

Potes mihi dicere, non habeo quod tribuam egeuti, non possim jejunare, non possum flere. Numquid potes mihi dicere charitatem habere non possum, &c.

low, whether thy leiſure be much or little, whether thy calling be eaſie or laborious, thou maiſt love; love doth not pinch the belly, wearies not the hands, makes not the head ake, empties not the purſe: for love is neither grief nor pain; 'tis eaſie to all men, none can plead any excuſes againſt it.

Facilis res, eſt Domine JESU CHRISTE *ſuperamande, dilectio, a qua nullus cujuſcunque ſtatus, gradus, aut conditionis exiſtat excuſari poteſt, &c.* Idiot.

§. 15.

An Objection anſwer'd.

Now here I will digreſs a little to anſwer two Objections which poſſibly might be made againſt what I have ſaid of Divine Love. The firſt, that I have humaniz'd it too much; that whereas it is ſupernatural and ſhould be ſpiritual, I have made it almoſt palpable and ſenſible. To this I ſay, that whether we ſet our love upon earthly or heavenly things, upon God or upon the world, ſtill it is the ſame paſſion, which reſides in the ſame humane faculty. The will of man, and the effects thereof are alike evident and real. He that truly loves God, hath that ſame hearty affection for him,

as

as to the kind, as one friend hath for another: a ſincere lover of *JESUS* will ſeek to pleaſe him, and to be with him, and to enjoy him, and do all that for him, which men would do for thoſe whom they love heartily: all the difference is, that Divine Love hath its proper expreſſions, can never be too great, and is in all reſpects infinitely more excellent than the love of any creature. Therefore, if in ſome places I have repreſented things plainly, and made that, in ſome manner to be touch't by ſenſe which is only the object of faith, my deſign was thereby to move the affections, and to bring down the notions of Religion, from the head into the heart. *Faith* ſhould be *the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen:* We ſhould conſider things of faith, whether paſt or to come, as if they had now a real ſubſiſtence, as if they were preſent before our eyes; their greatneſs then, would be better view'd, and have the greater power upon us: as *Moſes*, who, by conſideration, *ſeeing him who is inviſible*, was thereby enabled to prefer the afflictions of Gods people to the pleaſures and dignities of the

Heb. 11.1.

27.

the Courts of *Pharaoh*. I believe it was a great advantage to the Piety of Primitive ages, that they liv'd near the time when those things were acted, which we now believe at a greater distance: for then, the Revelations of the New Testament were every Christians discourse and admiration; the proximity of the times made them almost visible, and the recent foot-steps of those great transactions gave them a kind of sensibility, whereby their thoughts and considerations were drawn and retain'd, and made serious and efficacious. And I believe it may be a great cause of the degeneracy of these latter ages, that faith is become too notional, too metaphysical and abstracted, whereas we should vest the great objects of our faith with material circumstances, to make them in some manner the object of sense, that to us it might be said as S. *Paul* to the *Galatians*, *Before your eyes* JESUS CHRIST *hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you*; and that, in all other instances, our faith might be to us, *the evidence of things not seen*. When we look upon the things of revelation as far distant *Gal.* 3. 1.

ſtant from us, they appear hardly credible, and not much to be regarded: but a cloſer viewing of them, by a nearer and almoſt ſenſible conſideration, would make them appear great and wonderful, would make deep and laſting impreſſions on our minds, and cauſe us to cry out with grief and wonder; Lord, what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him! or rather, what is man, that he is unmindful of thee! However, I have the warrant, and do claim the priviledge, of them that write contemplative meditations, to repreſent things as preſent and viſible; and well we may, eſpecially when we treat of the love of God ſhewed to mankind in *JESUS*: for that love became palpable, and converſt among men, and was manifeſted to ſenſe, in the birth, the actions, and the ſufferings of our Bleſſed Saviour: who by becoming man, ſeem'd to comply with that unjuſt and yet general deſire which men had, of worſhipping humane creatures, and having things viſible and material for the object of their devotion and Religious love.

The

The other Objection would perhaps be made by them who ſcruple and refuſe to bow at the Holy name of *JESUS*, and who might ſay that I have mention'd it too often and too often call'd Divine Charity, The love of *JESUS*: and that in ſo doing I have been either ſuperſtitious or injurious to God. To this I anſwer, That as our Bleſſed Saviour ſaith, *He that hateth me, hateth my father alſo*: ſo we may ſay, that he that loveth him loveth his father alſo. For the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghoſt are one and the ſame God bleſſed for ever; *he that loveth him that begat, loveth alſo him that is begotten*, and ſo reciprocally. The Divine Eſſence is but one, it admits of no diviſion: therefore whatever honour is paid to one of the Divine Perſons, is paid to all Three, the Ever-glorious Trinity is honour'd by it. But then it muſt be conſider'd that *JESUS* the ſecond Perſon of that Bleſſed and Glorious Trinity is not only God, but alſo Man, and ſo Mediator betwixt God and Man: ſo that by, and through him we pray, we worſhip, we love God. As God

§. 16. *A ſecond objection anſwer'd.*

Joh. 15. 23

1 *Joh.* 5. 1.

manifeſted his love to men in *JESUS*: ſo in *JESUS* men offer
1 *Joh.*4.9. the returns of their love to God; *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe God ſent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him*: and in this is manifeſted our love towards God, that we receive, and love, and obey that Son. With this, God is in no wiſe offended, but rather infinitely well
Joh. 14.21 pleas'd; *he that loveth me ſhall be loved of my Father*; ſaith our Bleſſed
23. Saviour; *If a man love me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*; and again,
Joh. 12.26 *If any man ſerve me, him will my Father honour.* Though we owe our redemption to the infinite mercies of God Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt: yet in a more eſpecial manner we are ingaged to the Son, who perſonally came down from heaven, *for us men and for our ſalvation. JESUS is the Author and finiſher of our faith*, he is the Founder of our Holy Religion; it is he hath reveal'd thoſe doctrines we are to believe; it is he hath given us thoſe laws and precepts whereby we are to live, it is he from whom

whom we are called Chriſtians; it is he who for us *deſpiſed the ſhame and indured the Croſs*, who hath ſhed his blood and given his life a ranſom for ours; it is he who by contracting a near relation with us, becoming our brother, hath caus'd us to be adopted Sons of God, and heirs with him of an eternal kingdom; it is he who is our Lord and Maſter, and will be our judge and our rewarder if we be faithful to him. *For this end Chriſt died and roſe again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*, ſaith S. *Paul*. *God hath made that ſame* JESUS *whom ye have crucified both Lord and Chriſt, him God hath exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour*, ſaith S. *Peter*. *All power is given him in heaven and earth*: and *he muſt reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet*. Hence the frequent and urgent exhortations to follow and imitate, to ſerve and obey JESUS; Hence thoſe Pathetick words of S. *Paul*, *The love of Chriſt conſtraineth us*, and again, *what things were gain to me I counted loſs for Chriſt: yea doubtleſs and I count all things loſs, for the excellency of* JESUS CHRIST *my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the*

Rom. 14. 9.

Act. 2. 36.

5. 31.

2 Cor. 5. 14

Phil. 3. 7.

8.

loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt. 'Tis JESUS hath won our hearts to God; 'tis he hath reconcil'd us from a ſtate of enmity to a ſtate of love. beſides that God was juſtly angry for our rebellions, his glories are ſo bright, ſo amazing, his Divine Majeſty ſo high, that to love a being ſo infinitely above us might have been thought prophaneneſs or preſumption; reſpect, not friendſhip, is the affection of ſubjects to Princes. Φθονερὸς Θεὸς was an ordinary Epithete for the heathen Gods: and even the *Iſraelites* were amaz'd and terrified at the ſight of a heavenly meſſenger, crying *we ſhall die for we have ſeen God:* 'tis the great humiliation of JESUS hath procur'd and eſtabliſh'd an everlaſting reconciliation and friendſhip betwixt God and man. *God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners Chriſt died for us:* and now *there is neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor any other creature can ſeparate us from the love of God which is in* CHRIST JESUS *our* LORD: Therefore for a reward for the great ſuffer-

Non bene conveniunt nec in una ſede morantur, Majeſtas & amor.

*Rom.*5.8.

*Rom.*8.39.

ſufferings and abaſement of JESUS, God hath given him a ſupreme authority over all the world, *Men and Angels being made ſubject unto him; becauſe he made himſelf of no reputation, and took on him the form of a ſervant, and humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Croſs, therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of* JESUS *every thing ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth: and every tongue ſhould confeſs that* JESUS CHRIST, *is the Lord to the Glory of God the Father.* Our love and obedience to JESUS derogates nothing from but belongs to God: 'Tis *to the glory of God the Father.* God hath highly exalted JESUS for his humiliation, and for the ſame cauſe we ought alſo to love and exalt him, as much as poſſibly we can, becauſe it was for us; not only bow at his name, but ever kneel and kiſs the ground, when he only ſees us; no fear of exceeding here, no fear of ſuperſtition: we can never ſhew him too much love or reſpect: *All Kings ſhall fall down before him, all nations*

Phil. 2. 7, 8, &c.

Pſal. 72.

ſhall do him ſervice: prayer ſhall be made unto him, and daily ſhall he be praiſed. Amen.

§. 17. *'Tis moſt pleaſant and ſafe to love God.*

A third conſideration will be that it is moſt pleaſant and ſafe to love God. Love may cauſe trouble, but it certainly is the ſpring or parent of all joy and ſatisfaction. He that hath an affection to nothing hath pleaſure in nothing: could the imaginary apathy of the Stoicks really ſeize upon any man: if he could never be miſerable, he would alſo be uncapable of all happineſs. 'Tis true indeed that the love of worldly things, in that they are vain and periſhing, is it ſelf vanity and vexation: *qui multum amat plus dolet*, is certainly true of all but the Divine Love. He that hath many friends hath many ſorrows; he that loves many things hath many things to fear for: 'Tis only God that hath thoſe infinite excellencies which can fully repleniſh our minds and deſires: 'Tis only God that admits of *no variableneſs neither ſhadow of turning:* and therefore 'tis the love of God alone that can make us eternally and intirely happy. It is reported of a perſon of great

great ſanctity, that an evil ſpirit confeſt to him, that were it poſſible for one who loves God to come into hell; yet it were impoſſible he ſhould be miſerable but that it would rather ſink hell it ſelf and make it diſappear, or elſe make it a paradiſe for him. Though the relation may be fabulous, yet I believe the thing it ſelf is true: However, I am confident that the love of God would ſweeten all the bitterneſs of our innocent miſeries, and that it is only the imperfection of a Chriſtians love that expoſeth his mind to the vexation of humane ſorrows. I am not (to my grief) a competent witneſs to this truth: but there have been many Saints and devout perſons who, in the fervency of their love to God, have found thoſe joys, thoſe raviſhments of joy which are ineffable, and which made them, in ſome manner inſenſible and incapable of any great ſorrow. And even the leſſer love of more imperfect, though ſincere, Chriſtians, doth in a great meaſure take away the ſenſe of humane calamities, and brings to their minds

Nihil crus ſentit in nervo, dum animus eſt in Cælo.

the greateſt contentment and delight this world is capable of. A mans heart is more where it loves than where it lives; *he that loveth dwelleth in God and God in him:* and what greater, what more excellent bliſs can we imagine or deſire? What ſtronger expreſſion could one find to expreſs the higheſt felicities? *to dwell in God!* to be ſwallow'd up in an abyſs of infinite goodneſs! to be overwhelm'd in the immenſity of Divine Joys and perfections! as an atome in the air, as a drop of water in the Ocean: ſo *he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.* Nothing can better repreſent thoſe tranſcendent and delicious raptures wherewith the ſoul is inebriated and raiſed above it ſelf. This was it made the Holy Martyrs ſhout and rejoyce in the midſt of the flames: they *dwelt in God*; no ſorrow, no harm could approach them. Happy are they that can ſay with S. *Paul*, *Our life is hid with Chriſt in*

Magis eſt ubi amat quam ubi animat.

1 *John* 4. 16.

Deus Charitas eſt, quid pretioſius? & qui manet in Charitate, in Deo manet, quid ſecurius, & Deus in eo, quid jucundius. Bern.

Extaſin facit amor amatores ſuo ſtatu dimovet, ſui juris eſſe non ſinit. Dionyſ. de Divin. nom.

Col. 3. 3.

in God, and *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* The love of God fits us for the joys of heaven, and is an anticipation of them; it powerfully governs the will, and it sweetly overflows the mind; it is the perfection of grace, and will be the consummation of glory: but 'tis much easier and happier to feel than to express it. *How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointment than all spices!* Gal. 2.20. Cant. 4.10.

One thing that adds much to the worth and the pleasure of Divine Love, is that it never fails: it is of the nature of its object, eternal, as God is; *whether there be prophecies, they shall fail: whether there be tongues, they shall cease: whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away: but charity never faileth.* Faith and hope may accompany us as far as heaven's gate, but there they forsake us; the one is turned into sight and the other into injoyment; love alone enters and abides with us to eternity. Our greatest safety therefore as well as pleasure consists in loving God affectionately; for that love which *never faileth* secures our duty here and our happiness hereafter. We are 1 Cor. 13.8.

sure never to live, and never to perish in sin if we love JESUS sincerely: *He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God:* "and there neither sin nor misery "can come to hurt him. "What matters it then, "to be that by nature, "that we may be by choise & affection? If of our selves we are not holy and happy, we may be so by love; the love of God will transform us into his nature, and make us partakers of his holiness & happiness. Love kills us in our selves, that we may live in God, *Occidit quod fuimus & simus quod non eramus. Aug.* It maketh such a change in us, that we are no longer what we were, as to the sinfulness and wretchedness of our condition. *The New Commandment maketh the New Creature; men become Gods by loving God.* Love considers and dischargeth all the duties of Religion: it allows of no omission nor transgression: *Love is the fulfilling of the law: this is love that we keep his Commandments. Ille sancte & juste agit qui sanctam habet dilectionem*

Quid refert natura esse quod potes effici voluntate? Chrys.

Mandato novo facit hominem novum, homines amando Deum dii efficiuntur. Aug.

2 *John* 6.

lectionem. Aug. He is a Holy Man whoſe love is holy, for love having the rule and direction of all mans paſſions and affections, they become either good or bad according to the nature of what he loves. Therefore to know whether a man be vertuous or no, we inquire not what his condition is, or what are his parts and learning: but what he delights in, what he loves: for if he loves the world and himſelf, he is certainly vain and vicious, but if he loves God, he is pious and good, and of a certainty he can never periſh. If natural love be ſo powerful and active, as we know it is: how much more when it is ſet upon God and by him aſſiſted? This therefore doth greatly manifeſt how ſecure and well guarded they are that love God, in that their holy love maſters and mortifies their unholy affections. What is it that hurries men to ſin and hell and deſtruction, but their maſterleſs and unruly paſſion? now love can not only ſubdue them, but even makes them uſeful and ſubſervient to it; the love of God ſanctifies

Non faciunt bonos vel malos mons, niſi boni vel mali amores. Aug.

fies all paſſions and makes them ſerviceable. If it cannot make him meek who is of an angry nature: it will make him angry againſt ſin and againſt himſelf a ſinner; if it doth not make him bold and generous whoſe temper inclines him to timorouſneſs: it will turn his fear into prudence, and make him not dare to offend God; if it makes him not cheerful who naturally is melancholy: it will turn his ſadneſs into penitent ſorrow, and make him a *bleſſed mourner*. And ſo all other paſſions, love will make them inſtruments of vertue, or occaſions of a greater reward: that is, it will either fight and conquer them, or elſe put them to a good uſe. Love is obey'd wherever it appears, and Divine Love is irreſiſtible: it overcomes all difficulties, nay, it ſcorns it, diſowns the name of difficulty, ſaith, S. *Auguſtine*; *It is as ſtrong as death*, ſaith the Scripture; it breaks the ſtrongeſt and moſt vicious habits, and like death, it is ever victorious.

Amor ubi venerit cæteros in ſe traducit & captivat affectus. S. Bern.

Nomen difficultatis erubeſcit.

Happy

Happy and ſafe are they that love JESUS: for that love it is makes the difference betwixt ſincere and falſe Chriſtians, betwixt thoſe that ſhall be heirs of ſalvation and thoſe that ſhall go to perdition, betwixt heaven and hell. Many priviledges may belong to the tares while they grow in the ſame field with the wheat; many Sun-ſhiny-days they may have, and many drops of dew and rain may fall upon them: but they are not *rooted and grounded in love*, therefore they are pluck'd up and withered and burn'd. Many gifts of the Divine Spirit wicked men may receive; they may *propheſie and do miracles in Chriſts name*, they may excel in ſome vertues: but the grace of Charity they never receive, the love of God never dwells in their hearts. "Thou maiſt be "Baptized, (ſaith S. *Aug.*) "and yet not be good; "thou mayſt have know- "ledge, and remain vi- "cious; thou maiſt be "call'd a Chriſtian, and be none: but

Charitas eſt! donum Dei quo nullum eſt excellentius: ſolum eſt quod dividit inter filios regni æterni, & filios perditionis. Aug. de Trin. lib. 15. cap. 18.

Habere Baptiſmum & malus eſſe potes; habere, &c. Tract. 7. in Epiſt. Johan.

"but thou canſt not love God and be "wicked; thou canſt not love God, "but thou muſt be holy and happy. Thus we ſee, love affords the greateſt pleaſure, and the greateſt ſafety this world is capable of. The love of *JESUS* is a precious jewel, precious beyond gold and the beſt of pearls: he that hath it, hath an infinite treaſure, and it is ſo much the more to be valued, becauſe we may acquieſce in its poſſeſſion: we can never loſe it except we will. We may loſe our riches and we may loſe our health; we may loſe our learning and our eloquence; we may loſe our friends and our lives: but the love of God we can never loſe without our conſent; no time, no fortune, no Tyrant can ſnatch it by force out of our hearts; as 'tis never given againſt our will, ſo againſt our will it can never be taken away.

Charitas eſt amor rerum quas nonniſi volentes amittimus. Aug.

Verum bonum illud eſt quod non potes invitus amittere. Aug.

Quinquageſima Sunday. *Charity never faileth.* "O "Lord who haſt taught "us, that all our doings "without charity are nothing worth; "ſend thy Holy Ghoſt, and pour "into

"into our hearts that moſt excel-
"lent gift of charity, the very bond
"of peace and of all vertues, without
"which whoſoever liveth is counted
"dead before thee: grant this for
"thine only Son JESUS Chriſts
"ſake. *Amen.*

§. 18.

Love brings a laſting joy and peace to the Soul.

The fourth and laſt conſideration is, that the love of God is the ſolid joy and laſting Tranquillity of the Soul. No tormenting fear or ſadneſs can harbour in a heart that loves God; the Motto of love might well be that of a late order of Knighthood at *Mantua*, mean't of the Holy Chalice, *Nihil iſto triſte recepto*; grief and the love of God are incompatible: no ſadneſs ſhould enter that breaſt wherein dwells Divine Love. I need not treat at large of thoſe many doubts and terrors concerning future happineſs which grieve and almoſt diſtract the hearts of many Chriſtians to prove that it is a happy thing to be freed from them: there are few, but are ſo far acquainted with them as readily to aſſent to it; it will be more to purpoſe to ſhew that the love of God is the

the beſt remedy againſt them, the beſt balſom to heal *a wounded ſpirit*. Some perſons from their poverty, bodily pains, or other afflictions draw this moſt afflictive inference, that God is not their friend, and that therefore their condition is dangerous, and very bad, if not quite deſperate: and this adds ſuch a weight to their croſs, that they have no ſtrength to bear it, but are ready to ſink; whereas the love of God hath enabled thouſands to bear a heavier with patience, with fortitude, and men with cheerfulneſs; *I take pleaſure in infirmities, and diſtreſſes, and neceſſities for Chriſts ſake*, ſaid S. *Paul*, that great lover of *JESUS*. He that would ſuffer for God, will ſuffer from God: he that would die and be crucified, for *JESUS*, will willingly bear that croſs which *JESUS* lays upon his ſhoulders. And indeed 'tis a greater vertue, meekly, and thankfully to accept of that correction wherewith God viſits us, than voluntarily to inflict the greateſt ſufferings on our ſelves: what proceeds from God is ever beſt for us, and moſt pleaſing to him. No *Patient* will queſtion the love of that

that *Phyſician* who is his intimate friend, for that he makes inciſions, and applies cauſticks upon him, and makes him drink bitter potions; he will not ſuſpect his friends affection; he will not doubt but that 'tis for his good: after this manner, he that loves God will receive afflictions from him, and gratefully acknowledge with *David*, *I know that of very faithfulneſs thou haſt cauſ'd me to be troubled.* Knowing that *all things work together for the good of them that love God*, he will harbour no thoughts of diffidence, nor queſtion Gods loving kindneſs to him: but reſt ſatisfied, that while he loves God nothing can hurt him, and that whatever happens is certainly for his greateſt advantage.

But 'tis not always the ſtorms of adverſity that bring thoſe dark and diſmal clouds on the minds of men: they come ſometimes in fair weather, in the greateſt proſperity. Whence, 'tis in vain to examine: better it is to drive them away, for they are as miſchievous as black. They caſt a damp upon mens ſpirits; they freeze their hearts in ſuch

a

a manner that they can receive no ſpiritual joy; they ſo weaken their hands and feet, that they can hardly work for God, or walk in his ways: ſo that their condition is ſad indeed, not becauſe God is their enemy: but becauſe they being unreaſonably afraid of it, are thereby hindred from being his friends. To this evil none can preſcribe a better remedy than love: let ſuch perſons love God heartily, and all theſe terrors will vaniſh away like the vain images of a terrible dream; when one awaketh. Love begets love; therefore we ſhould love God *becauſe he firſt loved us*: and love begets a confidence of being lov'd again: ſo that if we love God we ſhall not long doubt but that we are lov'd by him: and then all is well. And if at firſt, our hearts do not melt into devout affections, and are not repleniſh'd with the ſweetneſs and comfort of love, let us not be diſmay'd at it, nor too much ſtudy our own diſturbed thoughts and apprehenſions: but let us continue to give God demonſtrations of love, to abſtein from what he forbids, and to do that which he commands, or

that

that which will pleaſe him, though uncommanded: and then either holy joys and extaſies will come, or it will be as well without them. No man is afraid of his friends, nor of thoſe whom he ſerves and obligeth; we eaſily ſuppoſe that they love us, whom we love, and that they to whom we do good will be kind to us: therefore let us ſhew to God all the love we can, and by words and actions proteſt that we ſeek to pleaſe him, and our hearts will ſoon be poſſeſt with a bleſſed aſſurance that we are dear to him, and he will never be cruel and ſevere to us. "'Tis "reported of a Religious Perſon "whoſe ſoul was griev'd and wound-"ed with doubts and fears and with "ſadneſs, that while he was one day "weeping and praying thus; O that "I were ſure that I ſhall perſevere "and never fall from God; O that I "were ſure that God loves me, and "that I ſhall one day ſee his Bleſſed "Face: how zealous then ſhould I "be in mortifying my ſins and do-"ing my duty! how cheerfully ſhould "I ſerve God every day, and take "pleaſure in ſuffering for him! how "would I deſpiſe the world and its

"vanities,

"vanities, and fix my thoughts and
"affections on things above! while
"he was thus expressing the sorrows
"of his troubled mind, he heard the
"whispers of a secret voice, which
"told him, *fac quod faceres*, do now
"what thou wouldst do if thou hadst
"all those assurances. With this he
"found himself so affected and re-
"fresh'd, that he took it as an Oracle
"from heaven; and in obeying of it
"found those comforts he begg'd.
Better counsel I cannot give thee;
fac quod faceres, do what thou wouldst
do, if thy diffident timorousness and
jealousies were confuted by a voice
from heaven, and they'll soon be
remov'd. Let thy meek submission,
thy sincere obedience, and thy free
will-offerings speak thy love to God:
and thou shalt soon find thy self per-
swaded that God loves thee dearly
and that thy condition is safe and
happy. Other assurance we are not
to expect in this world, and *this*
is not to be obtain'd any other
way: should thy comfort proceed
from any thing else but thine hum-
ble and devout love to God, it
would be fansie and presumption;
whereas so, it is well-grounded and
never

never can deceive thee. *There is no fear in love* (saith Divine S. *John*) *but perfect love casteth out fear*; 'tis never otherwise: grace and nature joyn together to make the effect infallible, that a Holy Love should ever produce a Holy Peace; if we love *indeed and in truth*, thereby (not by new and secret revelations) *we shall know that we are of the truth, and we shall assure our hearts before God.* Love may well work confidence and joy in our souls, for it injoys already what it loves: it is *affectuosa unitas, & unitiva affectio*, love is inseparable from its object, and the essence thereof consists in their union, if not unity. Though God be exalted infinitely above all things, in a sphere of Glory and Majesty so high that the Cherubim with their many wings cannot flie up to it: yet thither love sores up and takes God, and holds him as his own: so that every one that loves God is already possest of him, and may say with the spouse, *I am my Beloveds and my Beloved is mine.*

1 *Joh.* 4. 18

1 *Joh.* 3. 18

Qui mente integra Deum desiderat profecto jam habet quem amat. Greg. Mag.

Cant. 6. 3.

"We

S. Aug.

Magna res eſt amor quo anima per ſemetipſam fiducialiter accedit ad Deum, &c.

"We come to God by "love, *amando non ambulando*: and to him we "are united by love; "*amore Deo conjungimur*: "therefore love is a great "thing, (ſaith that devout father) it brings "the ſoul to God with an holy confidence, and makes it truſt in him, "and cleave ſtedfaſtly to him, and "rejoyce in him, and repreſent her "needs and beg his mercies with fiducial and devout affections. And this is ſo great a truth, that death it ſelf with its pains and ſorrows alters nothing of it; even then in the laſt agonies, the love of God ſweetens the bitter cup, and ſtill entertains the ſoul with joy and holy comforts. "It was the ſaying of S. *Aug.* "that becauſe the ſoul hath willingly "forſaken God whom ſhe ſhould "love infinitely, ſhe is forc'd there-"fore with grief and regret to for-"ſake her body which ſhe loves too "much: and that becauſe ſhe vo-"luntarily departed from God who "is her life, ſhe therefore departeth "from the body whoſe life ſhe is,

Aug. de Trin. lib. 4. cap. 13.

"with

with ſadneſs and much reluctancy. Now we may ſay, that when the ſoul returns to God by love, ſhe is freed from this puniſhment and reſtor'd to her firſt liberty, ſhe is willing to die for to be with Chriſt: and then comes a cheerful *cupio diſſolvi, O when ſhall I come and appear before God.* Happy is he who living doth ſo manifeſt his love to God by Piety and Charity, that dying he can ſay with *Theodoſius, Dilexi*; love hath been the buſineſs and delight of my life, I have daily indeavour'd by my actions to declare the ſincerity of my love to God: he is doubtleſs of the number of thoſe *that love the appearing of* JESUS: and ſo he goes out to meet him with joy and confidence, expecting a kind reception from him, *whom having not ſeen yet he lov'd*, and worſhip'd and ſerv'd affectionately. Let no man that loves God doubt of God's Love to him: for he that lov'd us when we were his enemies, ſo as to die for us, will much more love us when we have for him the hearty

Charitas libertatem donat, timorem pellit, &c. S. Bern.

Nemo ſe amari diffidat qui jam amat: libenter Dei amat noſtrum quem prævenit ſubſequitur, &c. Bern.

hearty affections of friends, It is the joy of heaven, the joy of the Holy JESUS when his loving kindness hath won and conquer'd our hearts, and 'tis our greatest joy, 'tis for us a heaven upon earth, when we love him faithfully and fervently, with all our souls and affections. The love of God brings that peace to the soul, which the world can neither give nor take away. *Her sins which are many, are forgiven, because she loved much.* Luke 7. 47.

§. 19. *The Close.* Now who can refuse to love God, when 'tis a thing so just and reasonable, so pleasant and easie, so safe and advantageous, something of necessity we must love, every mans heart is full of that passion, and every mans life is govern'd by it? 'tis but considering who hath done most for us, and whom we are most oblig'd to love; who is most lovely, and who will best reward our love: and we shall soon understand that God is to be lov'd above all things, infinitely, without measure: and if we love our selves as we should, we shall easily remove our affections from the

the world to ſet them upon God and Eternity, upon *JESUS* and his kingdom. Love, as we have ſeen, will make it eaſie and delightful to do our duty, will make the yoke of Chriſt light, and enable us with ſtrength and courage to bear our croſs cheerfully like Chriſtians: it will lead us the ſhorteſt and the ſafeſt way to heaven, and make our journey pleaſant: it will make us dear to God, and to his Saints and bleſſed Angels, and fill our hearts with peace and comforts: it will abide with us, when we are forſaken by the world, and all our friends can do us no good: it will accompany us when we go from hence, and open heavens gate, and enter in with us; there to perfect our happineſs which it here began: to be there our reward, as it was here our work and our duty. I may now upon too too juſt an account, uſe the words of S. *Bernard*; what I have written is not what I do, but what I ſhould do, what I grieve that I do not, what I indeavour to do, and what I wiſh all others

Onus ſine onere portat. Kemp.

Non quod ego iſta faciam dico, ſed quod facere vellem, &c. Ber. Med.

others might do. But withall I shall plead for my self the advice of a Greek Father; not to judge too severely of those who teach excellent lessons, great and profitable truths which they themselves learn and practise but very imperfectly: because the usefulness of their instructions may make some amends for the defects of their performance. *Grace be with all them that love our* LORD JESUS CHRIST *in sincerity.* Amen.

Μὴ θέλε εἶναι πικρὸς δικαστὴς τῶν λόγῳ μεγάλα διδασκόντων, ὁρῶν αὐτοὺς, &c. Joh. Clim. grad. 26. §. 18.

Ephes. 6. 24.

6 JY 53

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ERRATA.

Part I. Pag.12. lin.6. read *love*, not *service*. p.55.l.3. r.*plungeth them*. p.91. l.25. r. *task*. p.96. l.20. r.*wast*.

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